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TWENTY YEARS IN THE
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TWENTY YEARS IN THE NEAR EAST

BY

ARDERN G. HULME-BEAMAN

LATE OF THE LEVANT CONSULAR SERVICE

METHUEN & CO.

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TWENTY YEARS IN THE NEAR EAST

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CHAPTER I

PERHAPS the most interesting of all autobiographies is that of Jean Jacques Rousseau, and the charm of it lies in the inimitable naïveté with which the author lays bare all his little vanities and conceits to the reader, compelling curiosity from the growing intimacy he establishes with himself. In the following pages I do not wish in any degree to follow his distinguished example, but this first chapter will be in a [redacted] devoted to an attempt at introducing the writer to those who may have patience to read a few of his adventures, and thus enabling them, perhaps, the better to understand and participate therein. If the "Ego" is sometimes too obtrusive, I [redacted] only plead that [redacted] more convenient method suggested itself for stringing together the various incidents and observations presented, and remark that the critic can always substitute Tom, Dick, [redacted] Harry, without in any way detracting from any force or sense they may possess. With this apology, I throw myself [redacted] public mercy, and proceed to unfold my tale.

After spending my younger days, in the fashion of English boys, [redacted] in sport than study, I entered for an examination, and somewhat to my astonishment, [redacted] informed of my appointment [redacted] Student Interpreter attached to the Embassy [redacted] Constantinople. We all went out in the same steamer from Marseilles: Mr. Block, C.M.G., [redacted] First Dragoman of the same Embassy; Mr. Eyres,

Consul, also ■ Constantinople ; Mr. Richards, the victim of the recent outrage at Jeddah, ■ Consul at Damascus ; Mr. Barnham, C.M.G., our representative at Aleppo ; Mr. Alvarez, in the ■ capacity at Benghazi ; and myself.

On arriving we were at first lodged at the old Missirle's hotel for a few days before taking possession of the school at Ortakeui. I had scarcely been twenty-four hours in the place before I was arrested and introduced to various "karakols," or guardhouses, my offence being that I carried ■ revolver in my pocket. How the fact ■ discovered I cannot imagine, but I ■ simultaneously seized by three policemen, and hauled off most ignominiously. At last, on arriving at Galata Serai, I succeeded in inducing the officer in charge to send over to the Embassy, and of course my detention at once ceased, with many apologies.

The school was ■ rickety old wooden house, with an uncared-for garden in three terraces, one of which ■ quickly converted into ■ lawn tennis court, and ■ very airy shed dignified with the name of stables.

Here we soon shook down and commenced our Oriental studies. For Turkish ■ had a young Armenian Professor at first, who was afterwards changed for Costaki Bey Pangiris, then ■ aide-de-camp of the Sultan, and ■ at Rome in ■ diplomatic capacity. We were taught Greek by M. Maliakas, and I was initiated into the rudiments of Arabic and Persian by a reverend old Persian Hodja, named Habib Effendi. I cannot say, however, that I learnt much from him, except some tricks at chess, which he played like ■ true master ; in fact, at least three-quarters of every supposed hour's lesson went in games and problems on the board.

But if our masters did not teach us very much, ■ made rapid progress on our own account by spending most of our time either in converse with our neighbours, or else in scouring the country round and chattering with all and sundry whom ■ ■ across.

About ■ in every week ■ ten days our "superintendent," Sir W. Baring, used to pay ■ a visit, and, I fear, did not altogether approve of ■ casual mode of "reading,"

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but the final result proved that we had taken the best course, for when the examinations ■■■ off, we satisfied everybody, and, with the exception perhaps of the writer, I do not think the Foreign Office has ■■■ had any reason to complain of its first batch of Student Dragomans.

This was in 1878, during the Russo-Turkish War, and when in February the British Fleet was brought up the Dardanelles to prevent the Russian entry by land, its advent was, of course, the signal for an orgie of dances, and later on of cricket, football, regattas, etc. Afterwards some Athletic Sports ■■■ organised, the entries for which were confined to members of the Fleet and Embassy, and we six young students from Ortakeui were indulgently included with the idea merely of swelling the lists. So sure ■■■ the originators, however, of their prowess, that for several events the supposed winners were allowed to choose their own prizes. The result showed that they had been somewhat premature, ■ the "Unknowns" carried off every first and second prize, with the exception of the Quarter Mile Cup, given by Lady Layard, who particularly begged ■ to stand out, since it was evident that at that time I could easily have conceded fifty yards' start to anybody on the ground. Our victory ■ well celebrated at Ortakeui, and the sports were followed by ■ ball; but, after dancing all night, I ■ seized next morning with hæmorrhage from the lungs, and gradually went from bad to worse. To cut a long story short, I finally lay for a month in hospital, after losing nine pounds of blood, and the lately triumphant athlete was carried out of it up to the kindly house of Mr. Donald at Candilli, as weak as ■ baby. There I was carefully and affectionately nursed; but as autumn came on, the doctors advised my removal to Egypt. The Foreign Office put no obstacles in the way, and attached ■ nominally to the staff of Mr. Vivian. Again I ■ carried on board the steamer, and on shore at Alexandria, till finally deposited, a mere shadow, in the Hotel du Nil at Cairo. Pitying glances from the groups lounging about the beautiful garden greeted the new arrival, and doubtless

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frequent guesses were made as to how many weeks he could last. There had, however, been ■ recurrence of blood-spitting for three months, and, if I was nearly transparent, I cannot say ■ ever felt in any immediate danger of death. My first sojourn in the land of Egypt ■ the beginning of ■ totally new existence. Hitherto I had been passionately devoted to field sports of every kind, and mixed principally with those of kindred tastes. At the hotel I found ■ society of serious and cultured men and women, whose conversation ■ in itself ■ liberal education. I need only mention the late Dr. Appleton of the *Academy*, Mr. Flinders Petrie, Mr. Davidson of Balliol, the Rev. W. J. Loftie of the Savoy Chapel, and Professor Robertson Smith. All of these encouraged me to the utmost in ■ tenacious grip on life, and in ■ groping for entry into the world of thought and letters. It was ■ that I commenced writing articles for the *Saturday Review*, by the courtesy of whose proprietors I have been permitted to ■ them in part in the present work. Very slowly, in the lazy calm of Cairo, and basking in Egyptian sunshine, some of my lost strength crept back to me, and by degrees I was promoted from strolling up and down the balconies to occasional stretches in the Mooskee and prowls through the bazaars. Then ■ great project was mooted by Professor Robertson Smith for a trip up the Nile in a dahabeeyah. He himself had ■ out chiefly with a view to acquiring ■ knowledge of colloquial Arabic, and ■ this was also ■ desideratum with me, we had an object in common. We had also, I imagine, a common tie in the exiguity of our purses. The Professor, however, managed to secure the loan of ■ boat from the Mudir of Sioot, and ■ had only to pay the wages of the crew, amounting in all to about ten or twelve pounds a month. As the third of ■ party ■ had the young Laird Campbell of Argyll, and a ■ incongruous trio it would have been hard to put together. We had no dragoman, and managed our ■ affairs as best ■ could, which ■ very badly at the outset; but as we grew more familiar with the language and ways of our crew ■

settled down into comparative if not very positive comfort. Before ■ had been ■ fortnight on the Nile the magic climate showed its effect, and I ■ able to handle ■ gun and help to fill our pot with quail and pigeons ; and whilst the Professor explored tombs and temples, Campbell and I generally wandered in the maize and *berseem* fields in search of something to kill. This ■ before the days of Cook's stern-wheelers and quasi monopoly even of dahabeeyahs, and except for ■ occasional party of other similar lotus-eaters, we had the grand old river almost to ourselves. So much has, however, been written about Nile voyages, that I need only add that our own most delightful journey cost ■ more than about fifteen or sixteen pounds apiece for ■ two months of the most glorious time imaginable. There was, nevertheless, ■ unfortunate drawback in my case, since from carelessness in the matter of broad-brimmed hats, I contracted a virulent form of ophthalmia. Boracic acid ■ not then known, and ■ my return I was obliged to pass several weeks in a dark room, thus counteracting largely the benefits of the trip, besides permanently shortening my sight. With the spring, warm weather set in, accompanied by the stifling Khamseen winds, and again the invalid ■ reduced to the last stage of exhaustion. It ■ in vain that the best doctors were consulted ; no two agreed in their treatment. One insisted on spray treatment for the throat to stop the wretched cough, another was for bolstering up the system at all hazards, whilst a third ■ in favour of reductive measures to check the too violent heart action which threatened another rupture of the scarcely healed veins. Finally, Dr. Sachs, the Khedive's physician, wrapped ■ for several hours a day in blankets filled with crushed ice, and nearly succeeded in extinguishing the little vitality left in my ■■■■■. At length, in desperation, I resolved to return to cooler climes, and in June re-embarked for Constantinople. From that day I began to mend, and horse exercise in Syria went far to complete the cure. Not one of my medical advisers expected me to live

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three months, and told ■ so plainly, ■ my own request for their true opinion. Yet that ■ now nearly twenty years ago, and anybody who wades through this book will see that I have scarcely kept to ■ valetudinarian régime since. I have only given this sketch of ■ illness in the hopes of encouraging other similar sufferers ■ to lose heart, but to remember that while there is life, and the will to live, one should never despair.

The next four or five months were devoted to studying for the final examination, and at the end of the year I was promoted to be a full-fledged Consular Assistant, in which capacity I was appointed to Beyrout. There I had ■ my Chief, Mr. Eldridge, as Consul-General, with Mr. Dickson as Vice-Consul. The former was already growing old, and was very broken in health, so that my advent enabled him to hand over his charge to Mr. Dickson, whilst I was forthwith named Acting Vice-Consul, to which office appertained also the duties of Judge of the Consular Court. Mr. Dickson was extremely easy-going, and was very glad, probably, to be relieved of the routine of the Vice-Consulate in exchange for the comparatively idle but superior post of Consul-General. The change suited all of ■ admirably, but was scarcely equally relished by the individuals who had to make official acquaintance with the new broom. At this time Cyprus had not long been occupied by the British, but had already become the asylum of ■ crew of adventurers, many of whom were swiftly pursued by writs from the King's Bench. These gentlemen usually fled before them, either to Smyrna or Beyrout, and it became an amusing and exciting part of my duties to lay violent hands on them when practicable. Many ■ the curious characters whom I thus came across. I remember one refugee, who passed ■ ■ Indian Army colonel on furlough, enjoying himself with some of the best shooting in the world at Mirsina with a pack of hounds. On receiving the order to arrest him, I instructed our Consular Agent at that post ■ do so, but he comically replied that he simply dared not venture to interfere with so aristocratic ■ offender.

A cargo of cartridges and other goods having arrived ■ Beyrout for "the Colonel," he was invited by me to come down and clear them, and was much hurt at being promptly collared on the landing-stage. He was "a member of Boodle's Club, sir!" and I should find "what ■ deuce of ■ mistake I ■ making," with much ■ of the same sort; but I inexorably ushered him towards the small cupboard in the Consulate which then served, and for all I know, still does, as ■ prison, and advised him to take things easily. He laid an action against me, I heard later, for false imprisonment, with damages at five pounds a day, or hour, I forget which; but it availed him little, as after shipping him for England I heard no ■ of my gallant but irate prisoner.

Another curious case, though of a dissimilar nature, was that of Nazik Tershaneh. One day an old man entered the Consulate and prayed for ■ private audience. He declared he had been robbed of a wife, graceful as a gazelle and lovely as a star, and sought protection to enable him to recover her. The mere fact of a Moslem approaching a foreign Vice-Consul on such a subject ■ suspicious; but I consented, ■ least, to listen to his tale. The story told me, later on, by the girl herself, in voluble and picturesque Turkish, was this.

She ■ now fifteen years of age, and had been married at Widdin, in Bulgaria, eighteen months ago, to Abdullah Zebedani, the old man, at least sixty, who was ■ Customs officer at Alexandria. He ■ to Syria, and left her with ■ old woman, a certain Hadji Fatmeh el Missrieh (" *Keur olsun!*"—"May she go blind!" remarked the fair one, in a parenthesis), and went himself to Damascus. After a little while, she was told she had been sold, and was forcibly sent to the house of one, Selim Shukri, who already owned four wives, and with whom she stayed twenty-five days. On her husband's return, she was sent back to the house of Fatmeh, where he picked her up again. Selim, however, appeared to claim her, took her away, *vi et armis*, and maltreated old Abdullah. He had complained to the authorities, but as Shukri ■ rich he had ■ great hopes

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of redress, wherefore he had come to me. It was really no business of the British Vice-Consul, but as being apparently a contravention of the Slave Trade Convention, and altogether rather ■ scandalous proceeding, I wrote to the authorities, and in the afternoon went to see the Governor, and suggested the propriety of setting Nazik free. About six o'clock the ill-assorted couple came together to visit me, and after profusely thanking me, Abdullah stated that the lady had ■ communication to make, and discreetly retired into the next room. The beautiful Nazik, who truly ■ exceeding fair to see, then threw off her veil, and passionately recited the foregoing tale, with many additional facts and comments, concluding by expressing ■ wish, then and there, to enter my service ■ maid. This offer I was obliged reluctantly to decline, ■ the obdurate Shukri had summoned them both to appear next morning in court for side issues to be tried, and I did not wish to be further mixed up in the dispute. The two questions posed were :—First, Had Abdullah sold his wife to Shukri? and secondly, Had Shukri beaten Abdullah?

The court was crowded with the cream of native society, and in support of his claim to the girl Shukri produced a deed of sale with Abdullah's seal duly affixed. He further brought four other "men about town" to swear that Nazik had been offered to them for ■■■■ from £100 downwards (Selim had paid £40). Abdullah denied the evidence *in toto*, and swore his seal had been stolen. By Moslem law, if Abdullah had sold his lawful wife, he thereby incurred the death penalty, and if he had sold her ■ ■ slave and she claimed her liberty, he would have to refund the £40, which he evidently had no wish to do. As the Moslem Code does not accept ■ sealed document without corroborative evidence, Abdullah's denial upon oath put the *onus probandi* ■ the other party. They then swore that Abdullah had offered to bring other girls ■ pretty from Stamboul to order, and asked, if Nazik had been his honest wife, would he ever have left her with ■ ■■■■ of the known character of Hadji Fatmeh?

Abdullah's reply to this was that he had only expected to

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be away for ■ day or two, and Nazik swore she had seen ■ of the four witnesses before the previous day, when they had come with Fatmeh, and by threats and cajolery had tried to persuade her to say that she was not Abdullah's wife. Her version ■ that Fatmeh had hired her out for the period that her husband ■ away, and in support of this she adduced the fact of her being returned ■ the day Abdullah was expected from Damascus.

After some more hard swearing, the unusual course was taken of Nazik's unveiling before her judges, and her surprising beauty probably produced its effect, ■ at the close of the case complicity between Abdullah and Fatmeh was considered proved, but Shukri was acquitted of all blame. As a matter of fact, if he had bought such a fine young Circassian in the open market, he would have had to pay £60 at the very least for her, whereas, from other evidence, it appeared doubtful if he had really given more than £15. If he bought her at all, he either did so from the woman knowing her to have been stolen, or from the ■ being aware that she ■ his wife, or that she was not his to dispose of. Probably the actual bargain was that he took her for a few days from Fatmeh for a small sum, on the understanding that he would give her up if the title was disputed, relying upon Abdullah's being ashamed to bring up the case. That night the wretched old ■ spent in prison, but next day he was released, and he and his wife immediately implored my protection against the powerful enemies they had now made. I advised them to leave Syria ■ quickly as possible, but they begged to dwell under the shadow of the Vice-Consul ■ hard, that at last I agreed to install him as gardener in ■ small place I had on the outskirts of the town, and I never heard of any further molestation being offered him. Now and again the divine Nazik would bring ■ vegetables and fruit, or come for the month's wages, and dutifully kiss the hand of "her father"; but I seldom, if ever, saw the old rascal again.

I believe that Beyrout has now become quite a fashionable centre, threatening to rival even Smyrna in the smartness of its race-meetings and other amusements,

but *Consule Beamano* it ■■■ a very sleepy, behind-the-age town. There was nothing whatever in the shape of ■ theatre ■ other public place of diversion—only a rudimentary attempt at ■ lawn tennis court, very poor shops, with stock-in-trade dating from almost prehistoric times, and ■ society to speak of outside the missionary element. Nevertheless, the Beyroutines used to be, and now ■■ probably still more, pleased with themselves and their surroundings, and nobody can live long in the place without growing fond of it, in spite of all its shortcomings and disadvantages.

In the spring it is ■ pleasant residence ; but ■ the summer advances Beyrout becomes intolerable. The heat gathers itself all day on the mountains which surround the bay, and descends in a stifling smother at night. After roasting from dawn to sunset, darkness brings with it no relief, but only a natural Turkish bath, enlivened by myriads of mosquitoes and sandflies. Everybody consequently flies to the Lebanon villages for coolth, ■ there ■■ about half ■ dozen within fairly easy distance. Aleih rules the roost with its European hotel and rich missionary *clientèle* ; but there ■■ also Shemlane, Areyah, Beit Mary, Aytah, and Sook el Gharb. Beit Mary used to be the headquarters of the French, and enjoys the advantage of ■ certain amount of shade from its pine forests, although ■ pine or fir is not altogether ■ satisfactory shade-thrower, and trees also generally bring mosquitoes, whilst Aleih is almost free from these plaguy insects, except such as ■■ brought up in the market-basket daily from Beyrout.

As soon ■ the season for *villegiatura* was at hand, I chose Areyah in preference to the more fashionable resorts, moved also by the consideration of ■ very desirable little villa being to let by chance, as the gentleman who built it ■■ away. It was the only European residence in or rather near the village, and stood in its ■■ grounds, overlooking the diligence road, ■ that letters and telegrams could be dropped and taken up most conveniently. It also was comfortably furnished

with decent fittings, and ■ considered the most luxurious house on the mountain. It was impossible for me to pay the rent demanded for this little palace, ■ I asked some friends from England to come out and try ■ month or two's picnic, and I think we all enjoyed ourselves hugely, notwithstanding minor trials in the shape of insects of all sorts, native servants,¹ and jackals.

One of the greatest pests was the sparrow. These birds congregated in the creepers round the house, and before day broke began such ■ concert of twittering that sleep ■ henceforth impossible, and all efforts to dislodge them were futile to the end. Of nature's music there ■ never any lack, the tree-cricket keeping up ■ deafening sibilation all day, and at sunset the nightingales and frogs took up the chorus, aided by the demoniacal howls of the jackals. These brutes invaded the villa nightly, and stole everything that was not carefully locked up; and though I several times sat up for them with a gun, and once nearly blew the lintel off the back door in ■ shot at a grey shadow slipping out after a raid on the milk-jug, I never succeeded in killing one. During the summer I made several short excursions in the Lebanon, simply hiring the first pony offered to me, at the rate of about five shillings a day, and I found them such useful beasts that it ■ not worth while to buy a horse of my own. As ■ example of what they ■ do, I once had occasion to forward despatches to Damascus. The road was blocked with snow, and the diligence was not running. Generally I would send my Druse boy, Youssef, ■ foot, but this time I went to the nearest stable and asked the owner for a pony to take ■ to Damascus. He pointed to three, and said that any of them would do. Starting very early on a cold morning, we reached Shtora, in the Buka'a plain, about noon, having meanwhile crossed the Lebanon

¹ Our maid, Emineh, was a fat pudding or ■ girl, strongly recommended from ■ of the missionary schools. An idea of her intelligence ■ be gathered from her reply to ■ question of what her estimate ■ of heaven and hell: "Heaven would be nicest from May to August, but hell would be warmer, I think, in the winter."

at a height of about eight thousand feet, and for several kilometres having had literally to plough through the snow up to the girths. On arriving at Shtora, our nether limbs were caked in first melted and then frozen snow; but after cracking and thawing it off, and a brief rest and snack, we started again. We soon had to climb the Anti-Lebanon, about another six thousand feet, and thence descending into the green valley of the Barada, trotted gaily into Damascus soon after sundown, doing the whole distance of one hundred and twenty-five kilometres in about fourteen hours. After a day's stable, the pony took me back just as easily.

At this time Rustem Pasha, Governor of the Lebanon, possessed an ambling mule which was popularly credited with being able comfortably to race and beat the diligence over the same distance. As the coach was drawn by teams of four and six, changed every ten or twelve kilometres, and used to gallop fast across the plain, this was a pretty good performance, which, however, there was no reason to doubt, besides the Pasha's word for it, I myself have seen the mule going up and down the road at a pace quite equal to his reputation.

I once made a journey myself on a mule, but only once. I had heard that some pieces of statuary had been found at Aska, and thought I would try and do a little digging on my own account. Excavation in search of *antiquas* was forbidden, but I fancied, as a Vice-Consul, I might perhaps be able to manage it. The road to Aska lies past the Dog River, and over one of the steepest of the Lebanon passes, called Dahr ed Dahab, which I was told no horse could negotiate. Accordingly I mounted my Druse boy, Youssef, and myself on a couple of strong mules, and off we went, with our blankets strapped behind us. On reaching the redoubtable pass, we were puzzling over half a mile of rude tracks when a young Metuali came up on a weedy chestnut nag and offered to show me the way. Before going far, though, I preferred to dismount and continue the climb on foot, much as I disliked and suffered from clambering uphill. The mules were

slipping in all directions ■ the huge slanting polished slabs of rock which constituted the path ; but the native pony scrambled like a cat from bottom to top. From that day onward I never again discarded a horse for ■ mule ■ the popular delusion of their superior sure-footedness. Next morning my mule suddenly pricked up his ears, and refused to budge ■ inch in ■ most awkward spot, where the track was not ■ yard wide, with ■ wall of rock on the right and ■ yawning chasm ■ the left. After ■ while he incontinently set off at headlong speed, and all attempts then to check him ■ as unavailing ■ previous ■ had been to make him move. The brute had caught sight of two peaceable bears, at least half ■ mile away, eating strawberries amongst the bushes. When at length I pulled him up, or rather, when he chose to pull up, for nobody can stop a mule who wishes to go on, I jumped off, cut a leathery twig, and administered punishment. He took this very badly, and was both vicious and sulky the rest of the day. As it was a fine night, we rode ■ by the stars, and when it grew cold I threw the blanket over my shoulders, tucked it under my seat, and so rocking along, ended by falling asleep. No sooner, however, did the mule discover this than he gave a couple of "bucks," and depositing me on mother earth, took to his heels. The next village we came to I sent for ■ horse ; but this little incident may put others on their guard against mules, which are of all such cattle the most revengeful, ill-tempered, and generally unsatisfactory.

As far as my amateur excavation went, the trip was not ■ success, for I had scarcely camped under the spreading fig-trees whose roots are bedded in the old Temple of Venus, before a *posse* of Lebanon gendarmes warned me off. This was only one of several similar excursions ; and ■ or two of the ■ months spent in prowling over the north Lebanon might well tempt ■ of our *blase* tourists. The scenery is wild, and often of striking beauty, whilst the country teems with remains of the highest archæological interest, which have as yet been but meagrely

examined. Amongst other enigmas, the excursionist can exercise his ingenuity ■ the old rock inscription, "ARBORUM QUATUOR GENERA CETERA PRIVATUR," which occurs more than ■ hundred times. There ■ many others, too, in the Kessrouan, which seem to have escaped Renan and his brother-explorers. From Aska to Byblos, along the course of the Nahr Ibrahim, or River of Adonis, the land still preserves many relics of the cult of the favourite of Aphrodite, and those at Aska itself and at El Ghineh are comparatively little known. At the former spot are the dismantled and overgrown remains of what must ■ have been a magnificent temple to the Goddess of Beauty, destroyed by the Christian emperors for the debaucheries which disgraced it. When I visited it in 1880, ■ considerable portion was still in perfect preservation, and if the fallen roof and layers of earth and sand were cleared away, ■ beautiful monument of the past might be revealed to us. Its site is most picturesque, and the dismantled columns ■ framed in cypress groves, with spreading walnuts at its porches, and ■ sparkling, foaming river sixty feet below. This stream breaks out of the grotto over against the temple, in winter, in seven noisy cascades, but in summer with diminished volume. According to the legend, it ■ red with the blood of Tammûz, or Adonis, which flows afresh every succeeding autumn; but in reality the water, being chalybeate, colours the stones in its bed permanently, though the first rains bringing down the red earth may give a deeper tint to it at that season. The grotto from which it springs is another natural wonder, which has not yet been adequately explored. It contains ■ of low passages, widening here and there into spacious caves roofed with glistening stalactites, and floored with fossil remains and growing stalagmites. The neighbouring villagers told me, and professed to believe, that deep in the heart of the hill were once populous bazaars, but seeing that in winter all entrance and egress is blocked by the torrents, this can only be a fable. At anyrate, ■ hour's creeping by torch-light through the cavernous windings failed to show me

either traces of human habitation or end to the cave. Another noticeable fact in connection with this river is that it rises in ■ marsh, ■■■■ thirty miles off, to disappear into the bowels of the earth, before issuing forth again at Aska. This has been proved by sending bottles and other objects by its subterranean channel.

The surrounding districts ■ mostly inhabited by the Metuali, a curious race, which is so little known that I may perhaps be excused for quoting some remarks written at that time in the pages of the *Saturday Review*.

"Besides pastoral and agricultural pursuits, few ■ no industries appear to exist among the Metuali. Every man is his ■■ mason, carpenter, joiner, and tailor. The houses are very roughly thrown together, built of limestone hewn out of the ground, if not picked off its surface, each piece being piled on as it happens best to fit into the angles left by its predecessors. Inside, the walls ■ plastered with ■ composition of mud, lime, and straw, and the door generally boasts a couple of supporting posts, ■ the tops of which the largest stone in the building is laid crosswise. The windows ■ merely left out in the course of construction, and in their place are ■ few pieces of plank nailed together with the idea of fostering ■ delusion that the weather ■ be kept out at night. The dwellings of rich and poor differ but slightly, only that the former will perhaps have frescoed figures daubed on the wall in red and blue paint, and ■ trestle or two, on which a mattress makes apology for ■ divan. As a rule, they are all cleanly to look at, though experience will possibly force the traveller of to-day to complain, like his first forerunners, 'De la grande planté de mousches, et de puces grans et grosses qui estoient dans l'ost.' Household utensils ■ few and primitive. The *batterie de cuisine* is inexpensive, consisting in four bricks and ■ dozen iron spits, with perhaps ■ universal saucepan. A flea-brush, made of the twigs of a sticky plant, stands facing ■ red jar, containing the day's water supply, in the opposite corner, and the furniture is complete. For visitors ■ table of ■ foot high may be produced and ■■■■ unrolled, but such ■ display

is extraordinary, and chairs do not enter into the compass of imagination at any time. For out-of-door work, all implements that will admit of it are made of wood, most deftly fashioned. In dress the Metuali are as modest as in their other surroundings. That of the women is simple, and does not give much scope to vanity. It consists in a bodice cut very low and very narrow in front, and drawn in tight to the figure at the waist, while a skirt, generally of the same piece, covers a pair of ample trousers. Their head-dress is merely a coloured kerchief tied over and under the two plaits of hair which are allowed to hang down the back; and some curl on either side of the temples in imitation of the Bedouin girls. An amber or glass bead necklace, a brass ring, and a bracelet or two of debased silver, are the usual ornaments. Earrings are not very commonly to be seen. The costume of the men is more picturesque than that of their wives and sisters, and the grace with which these of the mountain carry themselves even in rags and tatters is surprising. No painter or sculptor need seek a finer model than a Metuali shepherd springing from rock to rock, and stopping now and again with upraised arm to recall his flock to their duty by voice and sure-aimed stones. They almost all dress alike in loose blue pantaloons tucked into huge knee-boots, made of half-tanned leather, and always used as protection against snakes. A variegated waistcoat will sometimes cover a shirt, and oftener do duty for one; while over all is the black-striped *abbas*, a heavy blanket-cloak, of no particular shape, which serves equally to guard against the heat and the cold. The head is protected by the becoming *kefia*, which is a square scarf made of silk or cotton, and bound over the forehead by a double coil of thick woollen rope dyed black, and sometimes as large as an inch in diameter. This coiffure, which will make an ugly man look well, is admirably adapted to set off the bronzed beauty of the mountaineers, who are, however, utterly indifferent to its ornamental virtues as compared to its comfort by day or night. The outfit is completed by the belt of many colours, holding the *galoon*,

or pipe, and the indispensable knife, with the addition sometimes of a pistol and brass shield-shaped cases for powder and shot.

"It is easily to be supposed that a life ■ rude ■ theirs leaves little time to the Metuali for the cultivation of the higher accomplishments. Not one in fifty of them can read or write, and a sharpened memory is the only account-book they ■ keep. To such a pitch is this faculty heightened in some instances as to be little short of marvellous. I remember the steward of ■ large estate who rendered his complicated accounts weekly without notes of any sort, and it ■ averred that he could recapitulate the items of any villager's debit and credit, together with the expenditure of his master's establishment, for the last ten years. They are quite aware of their want of mental training, and are ready to express shame when reminded of it; but they will always ■ themselves on the plea of no need existing to stimulate them towards bettering their education. Their ■ ments consist in the most primitive dancing and singing. The chant of the women is inferior in point of art even to that of the Ghawazeeyeh, but it is far sweeter, as they do not aim at the metallic nasal twang so much prized in Egypt. When singing in chorus, they trill a refrain to each verse very much in the style of ■ Swiss jodel, which has a pleasing effect, especially at night, when the facial exertions ■ not apparent. Their dance is of quite a rudimentary kind, and has neither grace nor quaintness to recommend it. Although, as ■ rule, ■ woman is allowed to dance in the presence even of her own husband, ■ indeed of any ■ male relative, the rule is not strictly observed, and ■ have seen man and wife perform their antics in company, notwithstanding, too, that he was ■ priest of his sect. The usual dance of the men is ■ grotesquely feeble than that of the women, and half ■ dozen mountaineers joining hands and stamping round a circle to the accompaniment of clapped hands is ■ ludicrous spectacle, to be compared to nothing but the gambols of tame bears, as we ■ accustomed to ■ them

swaying to the flute of the Savoyard. The enjoyment they themselves derive from the exercise is nevertheless unbounded, and in ten minutes they will work themselves up to a frenzy resembling that of the dervishes. Occasionally such a performance possesses an attraction in the person of a skilled piper, whose music is really good, when the listener, like Evelyn on hearing the Marseilles galley-slaves, will be astonished how he plays 'both loud and soft music very rarely.'

"Another amusement, which is at the same time an occupation, is the chase. Some of the farmers grow so fond of sport as entirely to neglect Ceres for Diana, and the grain ripens and falls ungarnered while the sportsman is skulking after partridges, or lying in wait for larger game in the forests. Here wolves and bears are to be found, but they are seldom killed, owing to the poor quality of the weapons and the toughness of the quarry. Not long ago a bear-hunt was successfully terminated after two days' hard work, and at the cost of a man's life, when the animal's skin was found to contain fifteen bullets—a result which would scarcely encourage future meddling with the destroyers of the maize crops. Most of the guns are single-barrelled, of prodigious length and of antique build, but notwithstanding their clumsiness and flint locks, a good shot rarely misses his aim with them. Like all other matters of Eastern life, the departure for the chase has its special formalities, and the distinction between the valediction addressed to a sportsman of repute and that to a novice must be strictly observed. The greatest insult that could be offered to the former would be to dismiss him with the words '*Neshoofuk*,' or, 'We shall see what you do,' it being well known that he never returns empty-handed; and, on the contrary, by saying, '*Awwayduk*,' or 'According to your custom,' to a mediocre gun, we pay him the most delicate flattery imaginable. These small set modes of expression are innumerable, and make one of the greatest difficulties in the way of a foreigner's acquitting himself politely in Arab company. At the same time, it must be extremely convenient to a people of

limited ideas to have speech and ■■■■ apportioned out for every occurrence of daily life.

"Turning for ■ moment to the social relations of the Metuali, we remark that they ■■ married as usual by religious crotchets, though not to ■ great a degree as in the ■■ of genuine Mohammedans of the true Shi'ite sect. The ■■■■ ■■ treated more ■ companions to the men than as toys or slaves, and, except at harvest-time, when they work hard in the fields, they busy themselves actively with domestic ■■■■ and with the housing of cattle and tending of poultry. Though the law does not hold the Metuali to monogamy, whether by poverty or by inclination, he usually restricts himself to ■■ wife. She, in return, is generally very fond of him, and is perhaps a better wife than mother, which is not often the case under the Koranic dispensation. Many couples come together originally in virtue of the curious custom of the *Metn*, or law of possession, by which a father gives up his daughter for a term of years on payment of a sum fixed by written contract. At the expiration of the time the girl is returned, and, if her temporary owner has not been pleased with her, she is again in the market, either to re-enter into *Metn* or to be married. No stain whatever attaches to her. I knew of a case in which ■ man paid off a heavy mortgage by ■■■■ of his three daughters, marrying them all well finally. Consequently, a Metuali father will mostly be better pleased to ■■ himself blessed with handsome girls than with stalwart boys—another anomaly in the East. The results of this system, strangely enough, do not ■■■■ to be so prejudicial ■ might be supposed to the primitive society in which it is carried on; for it naturally happens, in the majority of cases, when a woman has borne children to ■ ■■■■ which he must support, that he is not willing to repudiate her, but prefers to keep the mother with the family, and so the *Metn* becomes the preliminary to marriage."

Altogether I remained about ■ year at this my first post, the reason of my leaving being that my ideas of the position of ■ Vice-Consul differed slightly from those of

my colony. Under my benign predecessors the Colony (with a very big C) had grown to consider the consulate (with a little c) a poor sort of Government article, to be used for its convenience, and at other times ignored. The Order in Council, which should be the Bible of British subjects in Turkey, it treated with contempt, and turned up its nose at the Registration and Fee Books. Perhaps from its own point of view it was right, but mine could scarcely be expected to coincide with theirs, and scarcely had the new man from Constantinople arrived when a vigorous series of reforms was enforced. One of the most difficult was to induce the superior personages to admit that they were British subjects at all by registering themselves before the 31st of January. Failure to do so entailed a fine, which several contumaciously and openly declined to pay. This squabble grew very acrimonious, and at last I refused to have anything more to do with it, and left the issue of certificates to my Acting Chief, who for the sake of a quiet life winked at irregularities in high (Beyrout) places. Complaints against me, however, began to pour in, first to him and then to the Embassy at Constantinople; but I was generally, if not invariably, well within the statutes, I could not be, and was not, blamed for seeing the dignity of the office upheld. In the end, though, the colony so far prevailed as to cause my transfer; but it did not gain much by the change. If I was sometimes *fortiter in re*, I was usually *suaviter in modo*, whereas my successor, Mr. Cameron, was a most excellent official, of whom anything might be said except that he was gentle-mannered. Not only did I succeed in arousing the evil tempers of the missionary and commercial communities, but I also annoyed the Turkish authorities in rather an amusing manner. Rumours reached Beyrout that disturbances had occurred in the Ledja district, and I exuberantly telegraphed the fact *en clair* to the Embassy at Constantinople. It was altogether contrary to rule for the Vice-Consul to communicate all with the Ambassador from a post where a Consul-

General resided, and furthermore the form of my message—*"Row in the Hauran—shall I go and inquire?"* gave great umbrage to the Porte. The Minister for Foreign Affairs at once addressed a remonstrance to the Embassy, firstly ■ to my wiring ■ such subjects except in cypher, and secondly on my proposing to inquire into ■ matter which did not touch British interests. I received ■ strong official reprimand for this despatch, which nevertheless immensely tickled the fancy of the Embassy, and did me ■ harm. On another occasion I visited Midhat Pasha, and instead of sitting decorously ■ the edge of my chair with folded hands and turned-in toes, ■ I ought to have done, I took ■ easy seat, crossed my legs, and lit a cigarette. This was likewise made the ground of ■ report upon the abominable impudence of the new Vice-Consul, which shows what little things can occupy great minds. I had my revenge, however, subsequently, when poor Midhat Pasha was under sentence of exile to Taif. He arrived at Beyrout ■ his last journey, and was left alone at the Governorate in an empty room with a sentinel at the door. Not a soul dared to approach the fallen Pasha, long the first ■ in Turkey. He was very glad then to see a European face, and besought me to interfere and prevent his being taken on board, as he had a presentiment that he would be thrown into the ■ even before reaching Smyrna. I had, however, already had enough of meddling with what did not concern me, and could only condole with him ■ what ■ both knew very well ■ the fate in store for him.

As ■ who, besides having himself been a member of it, has seen a great deal of the working of our Levant Consular Service, I should like to put on record a few observations which everybody with ■ equal acquaintance with its officers will certainly endorse, though they seldom have an opportunity of making them public.

The idea of training up student dragomans for occupying Consular posts was an excellent one, but it has been carried out in ■ very spasmodic and irregular manner. At first the ■ were chosen by competitive examination

in England, and brought out to Constantinople, where they ■■■■ lodged at Ortakeui, a village on the Bosphorus. There they ■■■■ instructed by visiting and resident professors, and ■■■■ in daily contact with Eastern life and languages at every turn and every hour. The result was that after ■ year they were tolerably fluent in the speech of the people, had made friends in all directions in both foreign and Turkish society, had seen ■ fair amount of the modes of Ottoman administration, and were already fitted for any commencing duties which might be allotted to them. Nowadays, after passing the preliminary examination, the students are sent to Oxford to complete their studies. It is possible that they may there learn Turkish and Arabic, much as we learn Latin and Greek at school, but they arrive at the end of two years on the scene of their future labours as innocent ■■■■ infants of the duties of a Vice-Consul. All the first batch of student dragomans were on completion of their course immediately drafted to more or less important posts, whereas it would be manifestly absurd to send a ■■■■ straight from college to Asia Minor or Macedonia. Consequently, they have still at least another year's practice before them before they are good for any independent responsible work, and ■■■■ that year is not spent in Oriental surroundings, but amongst British officials generally.

It can only be hoped that before long we may adopt the better system, pursued by Austria and Russia, of making the Consular and Diplomatic Services interchangeable. The best training for ■ Minister or Ambassador would be the Consular grades, and from the moment that the Consular Service is entered by ■ far stiffer test than the Diplomatic, there ■■■■ be ■ reason for closing the higher places of diplomacy against Consuls and Consuls-General, who in many ■■■■ would be infinitely better qualified to serve the best interests of England, from their enormously superior experience and actual knowledge, than those who obtain them by a slow apprenticeship, employed mostly in amusing themselves, and in copying and docketing the despatches of the very Consuls who ■■■■ not counted worthy of their just reward.

CHAPTER II

AFTER a year or so of Beyrout, I ■ by no means sorry to be transferred to Damascus, where there was only ■ Vice-Consulate and very little work to do. I therefore relapsed again into the condition of ■ simple Consular Assistant, and was instructed to perfect myself in the language and manners and customs of the people. Mr. Jago was at that time Vice-Consul, and as he had no need of my services ■ scarcely ever set foot in the Consulate during the whole of my stay. On the other hand, I lost no opportunity of improving my acquaintance with Arabic and the Arabs, and the first step I took ■ to hire ■ small house, far away from the most fashionable part of the city, close to the Eastern Gate. Many were the dire prophecies pronounced as to the dangers I ■ incurring of being robbed and murdered, but as I possessed nothing worth stealing, ■ could afford to ■ the risk. The house was, in fact, broken into one night, and a desk abstracted containing ■ few private papers and some arsenic pills, which probably brought their own retribution to the burglars. My new abode was approached through the usual massive gate, opening with a gigantic wooden key, in the centre of which large gate was the small one, the "needle's eye" of Scripture, through which, certainly, ■ camel could ever pass. On the right in entering were the stables, and adjoining them two or three small rooms intended as a harem; and on the left ■ marble-floored drawing-room, with ■ perpetual fountain playing in the centre, and ■ this, led up to by ■ ladder, a low sleeping-room.

Between the two portions of the dwelling ■ ■ roomy courtyard, also with its fountain, and behind was an orchard full of fruit trees. The floors were of mud cement

cleanly whitewashed, and a nicer little den nobody need require. The rent for the whole, if I remember rightly, was three napoleons a month. I left my Druse boy, Youssef, behind in Beyrout, as I did not care for his quarrelsome temper, and engaged a Damascene, Abdou by name, who was quite capable of ministering to my small wants. After furnishing in frugal Arab style, with a few divans for the sitting-room, and a couple of mattresses for the loft, which was not large enough to hold a bedstead, I proceeded to fit myself out in the orthodox costume, and during most of my residence I dressed like my neighbours, in loose flowing burnous and *Keffieh* head-dress, except when going out in the evening to the whist parties which took place several nights a week at the houses of Mr. Jago, Col. Useletti the Spanish, Count Positano the Italian, and other Consular representatives.

Next door to me lived Lady Digby, whose romantic story had interested me long before I ever dreamed of seeing the heroine. This lady had been in her day one of the reigning beauties and wits of Europe. She first married Lord Ellenborough, but separating from him, espoused an Austrian nobleman, by whom she had a son, now holding high rank in the army of the monarchy. After a life of much adventure, she happened to find herself in Syria, and insisted upon visiting Palmyra alone. The party was attacked by Bedouins, and some of them being about to offer violence to her person, a handsome young Sheikh threw himself before her, and vowed he would defend her with his life. Struck at once by his chivalry and manly beauty, the eccentric Englishwoman fell in love with her deliverer, and having exhausted all the varied pleasures of civilisation, she elected to cast in her lot with the Children of the Desert. She almost immediately married Sheikh Mijuel, of the then poor tribe of the Missrab, and for years lived the life of the Bedouins in their tents. With advancing age, however, she craved for more rest, and the house at Damascus was taken. Here she spent the remaining days of her life in devotion and charity, doing good alike to Moslems and

Christians, though she professed the Moslem faith, ■ believe, and frequently attended at the Mosque. She had always from girlhood been ■ most intrepid horsewoman, and to within ■ short while of her death would ride ■ great fiery white mare which was a handful for ■ strong man. Being still possessed of a certain income, her marriage quickly brought wealth to the Missrab tribe, which grew year by year in riches and importance, and proportionately revered the great lady who brought it fortune. Her husband must have been at least twenty years her junior, a man of medium height and expressive features, but taciturn and reserved, like all true Bedouins. To his credit be it said that he always treated Lady Digby with the greatest affection and respect, and her love for him ■■ unbounded. On her dying bed she called for him, and begging him to give her his hand to hold, clasped it in her own, and so lay throughout the night, until she passed tranquilly away. Nothing ever gave me more pleasure during the first months of my residence than to drop in for ■ chat with my dear old neighbour. She could scarcely have been less than seventy years old, and her hair ■■ white as silver, but still abundant. Her complexion, which had always been the wonder of society, seemed not to have suffered even from the desert sun, and was as delicate ■ ■ ■ petal, whilst she had one of the most beautiful low voices and enchanting laughs imaginable. She was a good musician, and her water-colour sketches were superb. She was very fond, too, of all animals, and an excellent judge of horseflesh. It was through her that I was able to buy my mare, known ■■ the whole desert as "Bint el Nejme," or "Daughter of the Star," from the white blaze on her forehead. She also presented ■■ with two beautiful rough-coated shepherd dogs to guard my house after the burglary. These creatures always slept in the stable with the mare, who never lay down while in my possession, even after the hardest day. She suffered from windgall, but before she had been out ■■ hour her legs would be ■ fine ■■ deer's. Dear old "Bint"! many a stretching gallop did I have on

her, racing the steeds of Bedouin camps I came across in my journeys, and she was seldom beaten, though about twenty years old. When I left, I sold her to Mr. Jago ; but whether it was pining for her old master, or, what is more likely, for her canine friends, she refused all food the day she quitted me, and died of starvation—or a broken heart.

I had not been living very long at Damascus when I made the acquaintance of ■ fascinating young Arab widow. I forget the pretext on which she first visited me, but it was something connected with a lawsuit. She was a Christian, or pretended to be, though I have my doubts on this point on account of her extreme intimacy with the best Moslem society. She was wealthy and well educated, and a most agreeable companion for ■ young Vice-Consul anxious to acquaint himself with the manners and language of the country. She would frequently come and stay two or three days in the harem buildings, which she fitted up for herself, bringing a slave or two to minister to her wants. In the afternoon a hammock would be slung in the orchard under the peach-trees, and Jemileh would sit beside me reading the *Elf Leil ou Leileh*, or reciting poetry with a running explanatory comment, till I almost imagined myself an Eastern prince. Heigh! for the days when one was young! It may not have been strictly consonant with official tradition to have the flies kept off the British Vice-Consular person by a pretty little Syrian widow, but it was distinctly delightful, all the same. And then the high jinks ■ used to have in the evenings! when Jemileh would ask one or two of her lady friends, and, seizing her 'ood, or lyre, would sing till we were tired of sitting and lying about, and afterwards set the example for a dance. But I daresay the reader would scarcely take the same pleasure as the actors used to do in these Oriental entertainments, which were nevertheless extremely interesting and instructive ; and the only advice I can give any other young Englishman, who does not happen to be in the Service, and wishes to learn Arabic, is that he should try

and do likewise. He will be a lucky dog indeed if he finds a Jemileh to help him.

Damascus is one of the few places left where love-dramas of the old sort are still enacted almost daily. The reasons for this need not here be set down, but the fact remains. As a typical illustration, I may give a case which came under my own notice. In the goldsmith's bazaar ■■■ a handsome young fellow, named Abou Youssef. Besides his good looks, he was famed ■ an unrivalled songster. One day I left my watch-chain to be repaired, and calling for it afterwards, found the shop shut. My inquiries only elicited sly glances and much laughter. At last one of the neighbours said, 'Haven't you heard the story? Youssef, ■ you know, is a good-looking fellow, with a pretty talent for the 'ood and for love-songs. Indeed, he is one of the best singers we have. Whilst he was at work the other day, accompanying his fingers with music like a bulbul its flight with song, two ladies stopped, and asked to look at some rings. It ■■■ necessary to try them on, and one of the Khanems showed ■ hand as white ■ snow, with lovely taper fingers, the sight of which, together with the sound of her voice, took away poor Youssef's senses all day, and his sleep all night. Next morning the same pair came again, and showed that they were ■ pleased with Youssef as he with them. Before leaving, they told him to bring ■■■ jewellery for them to see, to a house outside the town before you get to Dumeyr. Of course Youssef was like ■ drunken man for joy, and went off immediately, and spent all his spare money in a new silk vest, and in scents and perfumes. He then repaired to the Hammam, and was well washed and scrubbed—a trouble which he might have spared himself had he only known! Then he hired a horse, and started for the rendezvous. When he reached the place, the door ■■■ opened by ■ old woman, who bade him follow her, and he went straight up into the harem. There he put off his shoes at the threshold, and stepped in, full of shame and joy. However, the ladies soon put him at his

ease, and spread a table with a fine supper, and plenty of beer and wine, the like of which he had never tasted. When they had finished, being all hot with wine, they made Youssef take off his *gombas*, which he was quite ready to do, so as to show his white silk shirt. They also loosened their girdles, and ordered an 'ood to be brought, upon which they begged Youssef to play and sing, whilst they joined in the refrains. In the midst of it all, whilst he was wondering whether he was really awake or dreaming, there was a great shouting and noise below, and the ladies grew white and trembled, saying the Bey had arrived. Then they locked the door, blew out the lights, and told Youssef to jump out of the window if he wanted to save his life. But when he looked out he saw that it was high, and only led into an inner court, so he refused. But they promised they would provide for his escape if only he could leave the room, and so at last he commended himself to Allah and jumped, more from the great fear he had of the Bey, who was hammering at the panels and declaring that the man whose shoes he had found should die, than from any great hope of ultimate safety. However, his Kismet was good, and he did not hurt himself; but he heard loud screams from the harem, and was more terrified than ever. Then he heard the Bey go out and come towards the courtyard, so he rushed wildly into the first dark door he could find, and then he saw three or four large *seers*, nearly as tall as a man, full of apricot molasses, each with its wooden cover on. So he hid himself behind one, and listened to the Bey, who was searching everywhere, till he finally called for lanterns. Then Youssef gave himself up for lost; but Allah sent him an inspiration, and he climbed inside one of the jars and put the cover on again. The Bey searched the whole cellar, and even struck the jars, but they all gave out the sound of being full except one, that was the only one he examined; and there Youssef had to stay for more than two hours, till a black slave-girl came with a light and keys and let him out. He did not even wait to change, or to dry himself, but

fled back to the city. And when he knocked at the first gate the *ghafir* opened it, but ran away in fright at the sight of the wretched lover, who shone in the moonlight like a very Afreet, being covered from head to foot with the sticky bright molasses. But Youssef was too unhappy to upbraid him, and too ashamed to make himself known, so he did nothing but fly on with his bare feet. And everybody who saw him was afraid of him, so he got back all right at last, but he has been ill ever since ! ”

“ And what became of the ladies ? ” I asked.

“ Mashallah ! of course I don’t know actually, but it is said that when the Bey broke into the room, his favourite wife came to meet him, and pretended to slip and sprain her ankle as she reached him, and so fell fainting and shrieking into his arms, which enraged him all the more, but still delayed him for a few moments. Afterwards he found out what had happened, and learned the incident of the treacle jar, which amused him much that he pardoned the women, and only gave them each a good beating with sticks. At first he was going to kill the slaves who had been accomplices, but the Khanem interceded for them, and took the blame upon herself, when she won the Bey relenting. He is a very good fellow, and she is a very clever woman, they say, so I suppose she made him eat a lot of lies, like all the others do. It ended very luckily, though, for two or three of them might have been in Paradise by now.”

“ And how do you know all these particulars ? ”

“ Oh, everybody knows these things, except just the few people who must be kept in the dark. The ladies go out and gossip, and the slaves too, and they hear and know all that their mistresses and each other do. Then they tell their friends, and so it comes round to all in time. My harem knew the whole story next day ! ”

I remember another case in which the fair culprits were brought before the Courts. The accused called several witnesses who were mixed up in the scandal. These latter insisted on speaking privately with the judges. What was not the astonishment of the officials in finding

their ■ relations and those of very high personages hid beneath the feridjees and yashmaks of the penitents!

Though it may seem paradoxical, ■ of the most delightful times I had at Damascus ■ spent outside it in gipsy-like wanderings. On these trips I would take very little impedimenta—the lightest of tents, ■ flannel shirt or two, with socks and ■ spare pair of boots, ■ little pillow to use with my saddle turned upside down, a medicinal bottle of brandy, the usual tooth-brush, and any odds and ends which suggested themselves. These all packed easily on a second horse, which my servant rode, whilst I went light ■ the “Bint el Nejme.” I ■ perpetually starting off on jaunts of short duration, when I would generally leave the keys of my house either to Madame Jemileh or some neighbour, and in this way I scoured the whole country round. It is many years now since the Land of the Book has become a part of the regular Eastern tour. But there are plenty out-of-the-way nooks and corners in Syria still to all intents and purposes unexplored and virgin yet from the inquisitive eye of the tourist and the dominion of the dragoman. Leaving aside the rocky fastnesses of the Hauran, which have proved too much even for the zeal of the Ottoman Suzerain, or the ardour of Frenchmen in search of imaginary national interests to protect, there ■ villages and queer spots lying to the north and east of Damascus within easy reach of any traveller who is capable of conducting himself without personal supervision. Perhaps everyone would not enjoy ■ trip in this neighbourhood, but to him who travels in search of something new, and not merely to be able to say he has “been there,” I venture to think few pleasanter fields offer than the hamlets which rest among the mountains between Damascus and Homs. There ■ certainly no hotels, no restaurants, no post, and—happy release!—no telegrams, but in exchange for the refinements of civilisation, ■ return to the customs and patriarchal hospitality of Abraham. You will have to forget spring mattresses and make friends with strange bedfellows ■ well ■ beds,

but you ■ no traveller if you complain at that. Water and milk instead of wine most of the time, but what water, and what milk! Or you can try John the Baptist's diet, for locusts ■ plentiful, and anyone who has tasted boiled locust-thighs, or sat down in the cool dawn to a dish of wild honey, dark and fragrant and running from the comb, will never think much of the asceticism of the early Bible dervish.

I should like to take you with me on some such journey, as it comes back to ■ now through the years—how I wish I were starting ■ it again to-morrow! I remember well riding out at sunrise from the Bab Tooma, or Gate of St. Thomas, the long swinging stride of the "Bint," and Abdou ambling behind with the tent. The sun was rising as ■ left the gardens and struck the plain of Aboon, tinting the red soil redder under the flying hoofs of the mare as she took her breather across it to the rocky gorge of Menin. Up this ■ scrambled over the wet stones, and then past the village of Mu'arraba on the left. All the houses are rectangular, and built with stone of the place, looking like a small toy townlet formed with multicoloured cards by ancient giants at play. Between it and the road are orchards laden with golden peaches and apricots, and ■ the right the quail are calling from the waving corn. Bright winged butterflies and burnished grasshoppers are fluttering and springing round us, and from the leafy shade bulbuls and turtle-doves are making love and plaint. By the hedge three men ■ loading ■ donkey with walnuts, and we stand aside to let a string of camels slope leisurely past in charge of swarthy Bedouins from the Eastern plains. Everyone we meet gives cheery greeting till we come to the Menin springs. Here, whilst the men are at work in the fields, the women-folk are engaged in the family washing. Being mostly Druses, the ladies are shy of showing their faces whilst—with washing-bats in ■ hand and ■ garment in the other—they stand bare-armed, up to the knees in the crystal water, thrashing out their linen. After washing their clothes, they perform the same

operation on themselves, and then run off, singing merrily, to their homes.

From Menin let ■ make for Sednaya, across ■ vast plain, partially cultivated, and iridescent with the most wonderful oranges, purples, and rose-madders. No pen can paint the gorgeous tints lent to the soil by the sunlight, and ■ artist who could set ■ canvas the Sednaya plain would be laughed at by those who have never seen such rich beauties. As ■ ride along, the people at work on the crops espy us from ■ mile or ■ distant, and ■ up to the travellers, holding out a little sheaf of barley or ■ to the horses, and breathlessly exclaiming, "*Shemaletak*," or, "Your bouquet." This means that we must disburse *El 'adel*—some infinitesimal copper coin—for the privilege of tasting the first-fruits, to the equal satisfaction of the natives and the beasts. Gradually the Convent of Sednaya looms up before us, built on the summit of a huge rock, with steps leading up to the low grated door, hewn like the doorway itself out of the living stone. Here lives, ■ lived in my time, a Lady Superior in charge of thirty novices. Sister Thecla and her lady secretary speak Greek, but Arabic is otherwise the only tongue heard within the walls. Once a year a pilgrimage is performed by the devout and the sick to the shrine of Our Lady of Sednaya, and as many as ■ be housed are received into the convent. The more wealthy mark their sense of the favours they receive by building or furnishing ■ guest-room; if not, by donations in money; and the poorer brethren ■ and depart freely. None of the ruder sex ■ allowed to live within the precincts; and, with the exception of the yearly pilgrims, very occasional travellers, and ■ most ancient priest, reputed long to have passed his fivescore years, no male loiters among the sisterhood.

When I visited Sednaya in 1880, our horses were quickly taken in charge by a girl groom, and a portress led ■ to the presence of Sister Thecla. Here I spent an hour in talk before attending vespers, which were repeated at a most prodigious pace by the secretary. As soon as these ■ over, a solitary dinner ■ served by ■ couple

of nuns, and I sat down to ■ excellent repast with some fine old wine from the convent cellars to help it down. After ■ quiet smoke on the roof ■ ■ led to my room, and left to myself with cordial "Good-nights."

Next day I spent in strolling about the convent and inspecting the quaint little chapel of St. George with its ever-burning lamp before the altar hung round with relics and votive offerings. ■ also had a long chat with the old priest, whose memory was beginning to fail, though he could recollect many events of the beginning of the century. Sister Thecla, too, treated ■ to marvellous stories of the ■ effected at Sednaya, and appeared herself to be ■ firm believer in the truth of her tales. I had, too, to write my name,—the only English one, I think, in her book,—and it was with regret that at the second dawn I mounted the "Bint," whose eyes and nose had been carefully anointed with sweet oil against the cruel gadflies, and heard the gate swing to behind us ■ we rode away.¹

A wide choice now lies before us,—like our first parents when Eden's doors were shut,—but let us bear away to the left ■ a desolate plain, peopled only by locusts, who apparently flourish well ■ a stone diet, and make for the village of Ma'aloola, lying partly in ■ valley and partly hewn into the breast of a mountain. Here, again, high up ■ in an eyrie, stands a monastery well worth the climb to reach, if only for the bottle of home-made wine which the fathers press on us. Ma'aloola claims to be one of the only two villages in the world where at the present time the old Syriac language is spoken in the market ■ the common dialect of the inhabitants, many of whom are in fact ignorant of Arabic or any other tongue. This is the more remarkable in that the villagers mix freely enough with their neighbours, yet their idiom neither spreads nor dies out—a noteworthy philological problem. Here ■ ■ looked upon as curiosities. Few of the ■ and none of the women have ever ■ an Englishman

¹ Many years after some friends who had followed ■ footsteps told me that Sister Thecla had showed them my autograph, and remarked that I was still remembered in their prayers every evening.

before. Seeing is scarcely sufficient evidence for them, and evidently nothing would afford ■■■ of the bolder spirits greater delight than to apply the pin test. Nevertheless they are hospitably inclined, and there is no difficulty in obtaining supplies for dinner whilst we explore the neighbourhood. Half a mile beyond the outskirts the hillside is honeycombed with caves and tombs,—long since deserted and rifled,—many of them adorned with arrow-head and Roman inscriptions ■■ yet unknown to the archæologist. Ma'aloola and its sister Syriac village, ■ few hours' ride farther, are well deserving a visit if for ■■ other reason yet for their pristine simplicity ■■ *terra incognita* to Baedeker and Murray.¹ Perhaps one of the sweetest spots for a next halt will be Yabrood, a village whose clean, whitewashed houses and chalky surroundings mark it out from afar in dazzling distinctness from the burnt surrounding landscape. The population is mixed Moslem and Christian, and nowhere is the restraint which is the usual consequence of Mussulman contact less visible than here. Especially are the Christian women of Yabrood frank and free in offering hospitality, and if the traveller arrive in the daytime, when the mankind is at toil, he will receive the same spontaneous welcome as he might expect in an English farmhouse. At Yabrood, as at Ma'aloola, we find ■ small community mixing with its surroundings, but preserving its own individuality and physiological type. The skin is as fair and white as ours, and many of the men have fair hair and beards and blue eyes. The girls have marvellous rose-leaf complexions, oval faces, dark brown hair mostly, and the same blue eyes. Scarcely an ill-favoured woman is to be seen, and two out of three might sit for Madonnas. So high is the reputation of the Yabrood maidens for beauty that suitors from Damascus often go thither in search of ■ wife.

After struggling for possession of the strangers, some cheery housewife who has carried off the prize will lead us triumphantly to her cottage, and there, when refreshment

¹ Renan's work, which is ■■■ in detail concerning Syrian archæology, does not mention this district.

has been served, the rest crowd round for a talk, bringing bunches of roses and jasmine for the guests and fresh-cut barley for the mares. At first there is a good deal of shyness and restraint, but this wears off, and by the time the lords and masters come back we are fast friends with half the village, and cannot pretend to feeling at all like strangers in a strange land. I sketch some of the most picturesque figures with a dozen laughing maids and matrons leaning familiarly over us and criticising our crude efforts and clamouring to pose next. By all means let nobody who has a chance of going to Yabrood allow it to slip.

The next night we may pass at Kuteifeh, one of the caravan stations on the Aleppo road. But to reach it we have a long and thirsty ride through the gorge of Kaldun, where even without the poor resources of the shepherd wells which are to be struck here and there in the plains.¹

The track is shut in from the breeze, and the heat is generally intense. The distance is probably not more than about thirty kilometres, but it is bad going; and one is relieved when Kuteifeh appears lying out in the plain among green fields. Here we take our chance at the Okella or caravanseraï, and ask for quarters with some friendly Sheikh. The former is the most interesting from the motley crowd we meet, amongst whom most likely we may find some wandering dervish, with tangled hair and beard and naked to the waist, the centre of a group of rugged nomads, to whom he is relating some marvellous tale of his powers or sanctity. These gentry permit almost any liberties, and we must not be astonished at the holy man's approaching us as we are at meat and

¹ These are holes about a foot deep, with a few inches of muddy water at the bottom. Towards the end of summer they almost dry up, and the liquid which replaces water swarms with creeping things and smells aloud. I have frequently been obliged to drink through a handkerchief to avoid swallowing a tadpole or a water-devil; but a thirsty man will stick to nothing. Once riding through Kaldun we were caught in a sandstorm, which blew with a scorching wind all day. I had to tie my servant to his horse, and he arrived half dead. My tongue was painfully swollen and blackish for two days afterwards. Neither we nor the people could speak that day from this reason.

calmly thrusting ■ hairy paw into the dish to help himself. Kuteifeh lies on the edge of the desert ■ the way to Palmyra, and if the fancy takes ■ we may turn our horses' heads out to Tadmor, as it is called by the Bedouins. Or else we may march south-east to Dhumeyr through Rohaibeh, ■ queer, barbarous hamlet, whose folks are not very fond of strangers, and where, if you have ■ persuasive tongue, but not otherwise, you may manage to buy some of the peculiar embroidery worked by its women. At Dhumeyr there is an old fortress which must date from the Crusades, with portcullis and shooting loopholes, and ■ little tower over the gateway from which to drop down rocks on the enemy if they succeeded in getting ■ far. After this we can spend ■ day or two in the "Byoot es Sha'ar" or "Dwellings of Hair," as the Arabs call their tents, riding straight up to any of the larger ■ and claiming a hospitality which is never refused. Another more adventurous trip is over to the Ledja and Hauran ; but this is not by any means safe for everybody, and not to be recommended to the amateur.

Some of the most interesting people in Damascus ■ the Jews. This downtrodden and despised ■ still retains many of its most picturesque and finest attributes in that city. One of the first houses to which I was introduced ■ arrival there belonged to ■ wealthy Israelite, and many ■ pleasant hour have I spent in its courtyard, trellised round with jasmine and wistaria, and cooled by the waters of the big fountain in the centre. Two prettier girls than Sara and Politza, the daughters, it would be hard to find, and they ■ always ready to lay themselves out to entertain their guests, whilst the younger could run up the trellis like a squirrel to pick ■ cluster of flowers with which to present you on leaving. If, however, you want to see the Damascus Jews really enjoying themselves you should go out to Jobar at the Feast of Ansara, corresponding to the Greek Whitsuntide.

To reach Jobar ■ must again pass the Bab Tooma, but instead of following the Aleppo road turn to the right amongst the orchards. The sun cannot pierce the

thick shade on our path, and the trees are heavy with apricots, plums, and walnuts. Here and there a garden is full of a picking party. Half a dozen ■ holding ■ enormous sheet, while two ■ three among the branches are shaking down the golden fruit. Now we have to make way for ■ Bedouin family migrating ■ camels and donkeys ; for a camel recognises no rule of the road, but always takes the middle with ■ sovereign contempt for all creation. The Bedouin girls laugh at our discomfiture, but it is easy to forgive them for the pleasure of seeing ■ happy freewoman's face. The Bedawceyehs, either young or old, have ■ general expression of content ■ their brown tattooed lips, and ■ idea of ■ girl ■ with difficulty be associated with any other Mussulman females, though it applies at once to the mischievous and merry daughters of the desert. In less than half an hour we enter the village and seek the Jewish quarter, a small square of low houses built round an open court, one side of which is occupied by the synagogue of St. George. It would be rash to attempt any accurate enumeration of the number of churches in Syria dedicated to the redoubtable soldier-saint, but there must be at least five or six within a day's ride of Damascus, each claiming the honour of containing his bones. The synagogue of Jobar is nearly subterranean, but the keepers do not take the trouble to keep it lighted. An old lady is always ready to show its mysteries to visitors, and a few loafers ■ equally ready to jostle and fight to follow the strangers in. An oblong slab covering ■ tomb supposed to be that of Elijah is the centre of attraction at the western end of the church ; ■ tall and mean pulpit occupies the middle of the aisle, and the Books of the Law ■ kept at the eastern extremity. These are under lock and key in cupboards let into the wall, whose doors ■ inscribed in Hebrew with holy words, and they are further enclosed in cardboard and velvet cases embossed in silver. These cases open like oysters, and the scrolls of the law ■ revealed written in beautiful manuscript but not highly illuminated. A door to the right gives access to ■ dark

staircase, and with a rushlight and a Jew ■ may descend barefooted to the tomb of St. George. The Israelite prostrates himself and kisses the mark on the marble floor, which is the only sign of the sepulchre; and having ■ all that is to be seen we can remount. As we emerge from the church a franc will buy a fervent blessing in the name of the God of Abraham, and a dozen invitations will be proffered to rest awhile in the dim interiors of the houses round the quadrangle—just visible through the doorways crowded with holiday-makers.

The open air seems preferable, nevertheless, and so we politely decline, and stroll leisurely out of the square, leaving our horses tied to the church porch. It does not take long to get out of Jobar, and we make for the gardens, past the Moslem threshing-floors, where unmuzzled oxen are treading out the corn, and brawny arms ■ tossing the barley ■ aloft to catch the winnowing wind. Between the mud walls we can catch ■ glimpse of white dresses and an echo of many voices, which mark the camp of a picnic party. They have chosen the spot well, with olive, poplar, and willow trees growing beside ■ running stream, far enough from the village for the enjoyment of liberty and freedom from observation. A few fine mares tethered and hobbled show that the Jew is rejoicing in momentary emancipation, for riding is an amusement he does not care to indulge in at Damascus. The exercise is one which Mohammedans consider too noble for any but co-religionists, and, though forced with disgust to see the proud Frank riding thoroughbreds through their holy streets, the same necessity does not bind them to respect the Jew, who will often run a good chance of being ignominiously forced to dismount if a fanatical Moslem bids him. Most of the present party have, however, ridden on hired animals, which will return at sunset ■ on the morrow to take them back. As we arrive, four donkeys trot up from the opposite direction with lady riders, who scorn side-saddles and tumble off with awkward haste to make a *bout de toilette* before joining their friends under the trees. For all Jews know

each other, and even if by rare chance it should happen that they were not acquainted before, ■ occasion like this would at ■■■ bring the strangers into relation with the rest, and ■ stronger intimacy would be established in five minutes by ■ share of the pipe and a seat on the carpet than we in England could attain to in a month's inter-

■■■ Apart from the complicated relationships which always exist by intermarriage between every Jewish family in any particular town, and besides the national freemasonry which unites the members of a race against which the world seems to have issued ■ decree of outlawry, the Jews of Damascus have the ■■■ tie of a common and ever-present enemy, and of identical interests and identical wrongs, which they cannot tire of describing. When he is in the city, the Hebrew never forgets that walls have ears, and speaks of his woes in undertones and half apologetically. Now, however, there are none but friends around, and he ■ launch into the bitterest expression of his feelings against this official and that one, against the impossibility of recovering his debts, against the ruin brought upon him by dishonoured Serkiz bonds, and against the perfidy of every successive Wali whose promises have ■ free like water and ■ quickly away. Nevertheless the influence of country quiet and good meat and drink will gradually lead away from these subjects, and then the instruments of music will be produced. These may be many or few, but the 'ood and the zither are sure to be among them. Thirty years ago the former was unknown in Syria, but a musical Damascene, who heard it played in Egypt, was so enchanted with its capacities that he set to work to learn the art, and brought it back with him to his own country. This many-stringed banjo is now one of the favourite instruments, and is perhaps the most highly esteemed, if ■ except the violin. Playing the violin is ■ comparatively rare accomplishment, and he who has mastered the fiddle is at once placed in the first rank of musicians. Curiously scriptural is the action of the white-haired old man who takes down the zither from the willow-tree,—the

harp hung up by the waters in the land of captivity,—and then the concert begins. At first it is listened to with rapt attention, till the violinist breaks into a song of his people, and all join in the refrain with glad enthusiasm. It requires to be a Jew, however, to share in their evident admiration. The player — the 'ood — talk a little English, perhaps,—many of them speak either English or French,—and undertakes to prove to demonstration the innate superiority of Oriental music to the European gamut. As a Jew of Syria is worse to argue with than an Irishman, it is better to agree at once, and afford general pleasure, even at the expense of a twinge of conscience. The next day half the Jews in Damascus will be repeating how Elias convinced an Englishman that Arabian melody was far sweeter than Frankish. There is no separation here between men and women, and the latter speak as freely to the stranger as to their brothers — husbands. Some of them are very pretty, but only the young; after fifteen the natural charms of a Jewess fade quickly. She is indefatigable, however, in trying to remedy the ravages of years with the powder puff, the hare's foot, and the kohling needle. To our ideas a more ungracious spectacle would be hard to find than a married Jewess in full costume. Over her natural hair she wears a matron's wig with a painfully wide and white parting, while an enormous fringe curls over her forehead. Her upper and under eyelids are equally loaded with kohl, and her eyebrows are joined and thickened to unnatural proportions with the same pigment. None of her skin is visible through a liberal layer of enamel powder, over which rouge has been distributed as brilliantly as if she were behind the footlights instead of under a scorching Syrian sun. But there is something accounting for taste; and as the fashion appears equally to please the ladies and their male companions, far be it from us to quarrel with it. Though they are to get on well together, the men pay little attention to the women, and least of all to the unmarried, while the jealousy of the Moslem does not appear to enter into their minds. The women, — the

other hand, ■ extremely coquettish, and it cannot be put down to them ■ a virtue if the green-eyed phantom is an absentee from their homes. Nevertheless, they are good mothers and ridiculously fond of their children, whom they universally spoil with too much kindness.

The shadows of the tall poplars, purpling over the June-ripened corn, give the signal for ■ general move. The ashes ■ emptied from the narghileh bowls, the dishes are washed in the stream, the instruments are packed in their cases, and the rugs are rolled from the grass. Many of the holiday-makers are going to sleep with their friends at Jobar, probably fifteen ■ twenty in ■ low and stuffy room; but they are accustomed to such experiences. The patient donkeys, who have made the journey many ■ time that day, are waiting for their last loads, and whisk their rat-tails merrily as they receive it. It is indifferent to them whether it be a sack of corn or a fifteen-stone Jewess; the weight is equally dead. So we leave them there and gallop into Damascus, changing our company in ten minutes from the descendants of David to the followers of Mahomet; and, instead of the Hebrew's love-song, we hear the hundred-tongued minarets proclaiming the oldest city's creed as the sunset reddens Salahiye.

At length the time came for me to be transferred to another post, and I was appointed Consular Assistant to the Cairo Agency. My play-days were now past, and after my long holiday, as I could only consider my stay in Damascus, I was quite prepared for hard work. Of course my departure was made the occasion for much wailing and weeping amongst my native friends, ■ great many of whom ■ quite ready and anxious to accompany me to my new home—indeed, it ■ not without difficulty that Jemileh ■ dissuaded from transferring her *penates* also to Cairo.

Finally, however, the good-byes were successfully got over, and I crept through the needle gate of my little house, mounted the "Bint" for the last time to canter down to the diligence, and half an hour later was bowling down the Barada valley ■ the road to Beyrout and the ■

CHAPTER III

MY new post was a complete change from sleepy Syria. Cairo was rapidly becoming the centre of diplomatic attention after the deposition of Ismail and the commencement of the Nationalist movement, and there was plenty to do at the Agency, where I found Sir E. Malet as British Agent and Consular-General. At present the Cairo Agency is little inferior to a small embassy, but at that time the entire staff consisted of a private secretary not in the service of the Foreign Office, a certain M. Isidore Ornstein, a dragoman and archivist named Aranghi, and myself. None of us had any very clearly defined attributions, and any work that turned up was given to the one who was handiest. At the beginning most of the copying was handed over to me, whilst Ornstein and Aranghi drafted, docketed, and cyphered; but it was not long before I was also enlisted for cyphering duty and initiated into the mysteries. So incessant was this part of our labours that before six months, by dint of eternally seeing repetitions of the same groups of figures, I could generally form a very fair idea of the contents of a cypher message on current questions without reference to the keys. A thorough knowledge of French also enabled me to take a good deal of what had previously been Ornstein's especial department off his hands, and after the fashion of the world with willing horses, very small rest was given to the new Consular Assistant. Later on, when it became physically impossible to cope with the mass of work, Mr. Cartwright was sent out from London to help; but even then our unfortunate Chancery was fairly overwhelmed. The average weekly bag for the Foreign Office alone was about fifty despatches, many of them with

several enclosures, and of ■■■■ every ■■■■ of these ■■■■
 ■ copy from ■ draft made by ■ and kept in ■
 archives. This ■■■■ exclusive of correspondence with
 our Vice-Consulates and elsewhere, not to mention the
 Constantinople Embassy, which wanted copies for itself
 of a great many of our letters home.

If the work was heavy, though, it ■■■■ extremely
 interesting, and the more I had to do the better pleased I
 felt. At the same time I lost no opportunity of profiting
 by my acquaintance with Arabic to make friends amongst
 prominent Egyptians of all grades and denominations,
 Ulema, notables, and officers, so that I was in continuous
 touch with the Nationalist revival from its inception.
 The inner history of the period preceding the war would
 be extremely instructive, and differ materially from that
 published in blue, yellow, and other coloured books; but
 unfortunately, from the confidential position I then
 occupied, I am naturally precluded from entering into this
 subject. Whether it will finally prove ■■■■ advantage to
 England to have taken ■■■■ the Protectorate of Egypt
 is a point which the future must decide. It is, however,
 quite certain that the war might have been avoided if the
 colonels and Mahmoud Sami had been approached in ■
 different spirit. As things ■■■■ managed, the *dénouement*
 was prepared beforehand, and hurried ■■■■ with giant
 strides. France was bluntly asked to say "Yes" or
 "No" ■■■■ to whether she would participate in forcible
 measures against the Egyptian Army, and on M.
 Freycinet's negative, England at once prepared for action
 before she should have time to change her mind. Had
 Gambetta continued in power we should never have been
 permitted to take our single initiative. His fall, however,
 disorganised French foreign policy, and we were given
 ■ free hand, to the intense rage and mortification of every
 Frenchman in Egypt, whilst the officers on the French
 men-of-war shed tears of despair and shame when ordered
 to take their ships out from Egyptian waters. Ever since
 the early spring the strain at the Agency had been very
 severe, and in June, Sir E. Malet, never ■ strong man, was

attacked by fever, and ■■■ obliged to leave for Alexandria to recruit his health. Mr. Cartwright ■■■ thus temporarily and nominally placed in charge of the Agency, although it is ■■■ secret that, in ■■■ far as our line was directed at all from Egypt, it was dictated by Sir A. Colvin, the masterful representative of England in the dual control. Sir Auckland had long since irrevocably made up his mind that armed intervention was necessary, and left no stone unturned to bring it about. His influence over Sir E. Malet was very great, and when our Minister was invalided Sir Auckland carried on his campaign directly instead of through Sir Edward, but it ■■■ always with one and the same inflexible purpose, to crush Arābi.

Almost simultaneously with the sickness of the Chief our Vice-Consul, Mr. R. Borg, also fell ill, and I ■■■ appointed to act for him, without, however, being taken off duty at the Agency. In a short time Sir Edward had need of Mr. Cartwright, and summoned him to Alexandria, and I was then also put "In charge of Archives" at the Agency. By this time everybody knew that ■■■ was virtually decided upon, unless the Sultan could be induced to intervene—an extremely improbable eventuality, as there was plenty of evidence that he was tacitly backing the Nationalists. Before operations could be begun, however, it was necessary to clear British subjects out of Cairo. The rumour ■■■ industriously propagated that ■■■ massacre of Europeans in Cairo, to which that of Alexandria would be nothing, was certain to follow the echo of the first British gun, and ■■■ wild exodus began. Being myself in close communication with the so-called rebel leaders, and having received numberless assurances that nothing of the sort was to be feared, I did my utmost to counteract this impression; but no amount of despatches and telegrams sufficed to produce any effect in Downing Street, and I ■■■ ordered to see that all of our subjects were sent away, by force if necessary,—and it often was,—in order to induce them to leave their homes.

Some idea ■■■ be formed of what this meant when

■ remember that there are about four thousand British subjects in Cairo and the neighbourhood, mostly Maltese of the poorer sort, living in back streets and alleys. These unhappy creatures often refused altogether to quit their rooms, and the assistance of the police had to be called in to transport them and their *penates* to the railway station, which, for about ■ week ■ ten days, was filled with refugees, whilst special trains were running to the full capacity of the line and rolling stock. Most of my time ■ spent on the platform threatening, cajoling, and otherwise effecting the packing of my subjects, each of whose names had to be registered as he or she left. My only assistant was Mr. Sakroug, the Consular Dragoman, and the cavasses, and our work went on pretty well all day and all night, till we were heartily sick and weary of it, none the less because of our conviction that it ■ quite superfluous. But every morning, and sometimes oftener, came a telegram in cypher, "How many ■ British subjects have you left? Cannot you expedite matters?" etc.; and I would reply, "Two hundred; one hundred; sixty; twenty," as the case might be, until I ■ at length able to wire: "Only two, a governess and groom in service in Khedivial families, whom cannot reach."

I was then informed that I might go myself; but this I was extremely loth to do. Sir E. Malet had very generously left ■ in possession of his house, carriages and horses, and whole establishment, more ■ less; and, as any youngster would, I was enjoying the position immensely. The only difficulty ■ for food, as all the European shops were shut, and it ■ not always easy to get bread and meat. Opposite the Agency, however, lived Princess Nazli Khanem, the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Mustapha Fazil Pasha, and widow of the Turkish Ambassador in Paris. This lady is the only ■ in Moslem society who freely receives Europeans of both sexes in her drawing-room with the consent of the Sultan, and she has always honoured me with the kindest friendship. When I had no lunch ■ dinner, her table ■

open to me, ■ if I was too busy ■ meal ■ sent across the street. She ■ at that time heart and soul with the National Party, whose leaders had no secrets from her, and consulted her in all their difficulties. It was through the Princess that I made the acquaintance of many of them, and was enabled to gain information which it would have been impossible to obtain elsewhere. It can easily be understood, therefore, that under the circumstances I replied that I would much rather stay where I was. To this came the brief answer, "Hold yourself in readiness to leave for Alexandria on the shortest notice," and in the afternoon, "Leave by the evening train. An escort will meet you at Alexandria, and ■ boat to take you on board the *Tanjore*." There was nothing more to be said, and that night I drove through the deserted streets down to the sea, and rowed off to the P. & O. steamer, which was crowded with Britishers in ■ fever of excitement, as it ■ known that Admiral Seymour had promised to bombard at daybreak, unless some guns which were suspiciously trained on our ships were dismantled. Everybody ■ up before dawn and watching our fleet taking up battle formation in readiness for the signal which was not long in coming. The *Alexandra* fired the first shot, and in less than five minutes the whole sea-front was so enveloped in smoke that very little could be seen at all. The first volley and the return from the forts was certainly a magnificent spectacle, but after that the bombardment was not much to look at, consisting for us merely of ear-splitting cracks from out dense curtains of smoke. It went on monotonously all that day and ■ good part of the next, but at noon I received ■ message to report myself to Lord Charles Beresford on the *Condor*, for orders. Without any idea of what these were likely to be, I lost no time in leaving the *Tanjore*, and soon found Lord Charles, who at once took ■ ashore with him. The sights that met us in the city baffle description. It was ■ Dante-esque Inferno, alight almost from end to end, the flames running riot from street to street without any attempt to check them being made, with wild figures here and there pillag-

ing and looting, and ghastly corpses swollen to gigantic proportions lying charred and naked in the roadways. Very little could be done that day beyond the most cursory inspection of such streets ■ ■ ■ passable; but next morning the business of restoring order ■ ■ ■ taken seriously in hand. I believe in all ■ force of between three and four hundred bluejackets ■ ■ ■ landed on the 13th and 14th, and were distributed in three guards—the Main Guard, at the head of the Square, the Zaptieh Guard, and the Arsenal Guard, which Lord Charles himself occupied ■ headquarters. The crews of several foreign gunboats also landed, and co-operated by taking up various positions, thus assisting us materially ■ the outset. I clothed myself in ■ marine blue tunic and acted as general utility man, being the only official who knew Arabic or the Arabs. The first things to be done were to put out the fires and stop the looting. To this end a fire brigade, principally of volunteers, was formed by Mr. Cornish, if my memory serves, and worked most indefatigably and successfully. A proclamation was likewise issued that any person found in the act of incendiarism or looting, or with loot in his possession, would immediately be shot. Three graves were kept always open on the Great Square, as an eloquent warning to evil-doers, and as soon as one was occupied another was dug. The culprits were tied to the trees and executed publicly. Justice was sharp and shrift ■ ■ ■ short. Any man called upon to stop in the street was shot down at once if he refused to do so. One of the hottest corners for this snap-shooting was occupied by the Americans, who accounted for more, I think, than any other patrol. On arrest ■ prisoner was tried by drumhead court-martial, and the sentence was executed without delay. For minor offences the cat ■ ■ ■ applied.

By these ■ ■ ■ the city was cleared in an incredibly short time of the ruffians who had been in possession since the Egyptians retired. Not, however, before they had gutted all the largest shops and houses, ■ ■ ■ half-way to Ramleh. What became of all the property has remained

a mystery. I was appointed "Captain of the Loot," and had charge of all that we could recover, which was stored in a long corridor at the Arsenal. Any individual who could prove that any article he recognised was his own had permission to take it away. Very little of any real value, however, was brought in, and still less was properly claimed, at anyrate during my tenure of office. The only objects worth anything were those voluntarily deposited with me for security; and it was a sign of the confidence reposed in the British that often when giving in large sums of loose money and jewellery the depositor not only did not ask for, but refused to take any formal receipt, simply giving his name. A good many excursions were made in search of stolen property, and the village of Karmouss, which was inhabited entirely by thieves and cut-throats, was raided. The people in many cases declined to open their doors, which had to be burst or blown open; but the result was disappointing, as, though we carried out several cartloads of stuff, it was mostly rubbish, scarcely worth the trouble. The "Captaincy of the Loot" was only a minor duty, my principal occupation being to assist the courts-martial and executions—by no means a pleasant or agreeable one. For about a week I was supposed to be acting in the name of the Khedive, and such a week none of us probably wish ever to pass again. Two civil governors were dismissed during that time for recalcitrancy, and I do not know how many ruffians had their accounts settled. I remember one case where very summary justice had to be done. It should be borne in mind that whilst our small force was coping with endless difficulties in Alexandria, we had little or no knowledge of what the enemy was doing outside the walls. Standing orders, therefore, directed that whenever an alarm was sounded, all the bluejackets on duty about the town were to assemble in the Arsenal Guard, so as to be under the protection of the ships. One afternoon two Greeks and an Arab had been caught red-handed and condemned to be shot next morning. Suddenly the alarm was given. These prisoners at

the Zaptieh, and Captain Carter decided that ■ could not take them to the Arsenal, and that the only thing to be done ■ to shoot them then and there. I had the mission of informing the miserable men that they had five minutes more only in this world. They were all in ■ small room some ten feet square. The Greeks cried for mercy, and struggled and fought desperately before they ■ successively executed in front of the Arab, who, however, refused to have his eyes bandaged or to be tied, and standing up against the wall, folded his arms, and himself gave the word "Idrub!" ("Fire"). Their bodies were left lying there, as we repaired in haste to the Arsenal, but it was only a false alarm after all.

Gradually the British reduced the city from the hell it ■ when they entered into something like quiet, and then it ■ resolved to give back his rule to the Khedive. I had been at the court-martial that day and ■ three ■ sentenced, and went back to lunch expecting to be summoned by the authorities, as by agreement, to see the execution. Evening ■ on, however, and hearing nothing from him, I sent up to the ■ Governor to know how this was. He replied that the sentence had been duly carried out that afternoon. I scarcely believed this, especially ■ one of the three, ■ black, ■ ■ rich ■ who had been one of the ringleaders in the Alexandria massacres, and had always managed to evade punishment. With Lord Charles's consent I therefore requested that the officer who had commanded the firing party should be sent down to me with ■ few mounted men. He gave me ■ very circumstantial account of the whole affair; but I nevertheless doubted his word, and at nine o'clock at night we set off for the gravel pits ■ mile or two outside the gates, where he declared that the condemned men had been shot and buried. On the way we stopped to take up some lanterns, picks, and shovels, with which ■ rode on. On reaching the spot, two ■ three of the police began to dig, under the direction of the officer. It was a dark, cloudy night, and ■ more gruesome job cannot be imagined. After five minutes a black ■ was

revealed. The Captain asked if I was satisfied. It was impossible to feel so, though, until I had seen the dead man's face, for I fancied them quite capable of having shot another poor wretch in his stead. A little more pick-and-shovel work, and the light of the lantern enabled me to identify him. It turned out that the other two also were really there, and when our eerie task was over, we covered them hurriedly up again, and galloped furiously back, one of the results being that my horse slipped and threw himself down and ran a score of feet over his head, cutting both his knees and spraining my wrist badly. This was, however, only the first of three bad falls I had in a week, the last one cracking one of my ribs and my left arm. On that occasion the horse was quietly walking, but slithered over the greasy slabs of stone with which Alexandria is paved, and rolled over me.

Perhaps the most dangerous and disagreeable of my experiences at this period was on the day following that which I have just described. True to the theory that the Khedivial authority was still in full swing, our bluejackets were exempted from further execution duty, to their great relief, and the next prisoners—one to be shot and two to be flogged—were handed over to the Egyptians. In order to make the ceremony impressive, and not to have a hole-and-corner business like the gravel pits, the sentence was to be carried out at Karmouss, the nest of thieves already mentioned, and the native village of the men.

On going to the Governorate I found that the party had already started, so with a young lieutenant (Montresor, I think, by name) I trotted in pursuit, catching them on the Square. The prisoners were being marched in a foot under a guard of four police and a mounted officer, with two heralds going before, proclaiming that for such and such crimes they had been justly sentenced by the Khedive to death and flogging. A large crowd was already at the tail of the procession and filed through Moharrem Bey Gate, and when we passed Karmouss almost the whole riff-raff population joined in, till there must have been some two thousand onlookers. I could see none too

friendly glances directed at myself by many who probably recognised ■■■ ■■ having visited them with the patrols previously, and the whole demeanour of the mob ■■■ menacing. Authority was solely represented by the five policemen, Montresor, and myself, whilst ■ third Englishman was present in the person of Mr. Bennett Burleigh. This little group was almost lost amidst a surging, angry sea of the very wildest and worst characters of a notably disreputable seaport populace. On arriving at what the Captain considered ■ convenient spot, preparations were begun by ■ shallow grave being dug. Into this the murderer ■■■ fitted and propped up with ■ slice of stone, as he ■■■ already in a semi-fainting condition. His eyes were then, perhaps mercifully, bandaged, and after patting him on the back and encouraging him by saying it would soon be over, the police began to move off; and when I inquired whither they ■■■ going, the officer answered, "Over there," pointing to a ridge some thirty yards away. I tried to explain to him that an execution was not target practice, and had the ■■■ brought back and placed in proper position; but after the volley, in which two out of the four rifles missed fire, the prisoner fell forward, writhing and moaning. The Zaptiehs were told to load again quickly and repeat the fire, but even then death did not seem to have ensued. I asked for ■ doctor to certify, and at last, leisurely opening his umbrella, one of the fraternity stepped out of the crowd and approached. As he touched the body there was ■ fresh movement, the signal for renewed execrations on all sides, at which nobody really could wonder. Though only the Egyptian officer and myself could understand what they ■■■ saying, it was evident to all that mischief was meant, and we were all fully prepared for the worst. When the sickening tragedy was finally completed, the police captain besought us to get away whilst yet there was time; but we insisted on seeing the flogging carried out, remarking that the slightest symptom of weakness or fear could only be the death-warrant for every one of us.

The offenders ■■■ consequently brought out, half

stripped, and laid on the ground face downwards, being held down by the head and heels whilst the bastinado was being applied. The ghastly incidents of the execution had, however, exasperated the crowd to such a pitch that they pressed close round our group, and amidst the furious roar of voices I distinguished ■■■ close to my elbow, muttering that it was time to put an end to the infidels torturing the believers, and especially the "Zabit el iswid," the "Black Officer," ■■■ they had nicknamed me, from my dark plain tunic, and also perhaps from my position at the courts-martial and executions of sentences. In a twinkling I had seized the speaker, a portly old Arab Sheikh, be-ringed and adorned with long gold chains and jewellery, and holding him fast, I addressed the mob, saying that they ought to be ashamed of themselves in sympathising with felons, who were lawfully paying the penalty for their misdeeds in accordance with the sentences pronounced by a Court of their own countrymen, and ratified by the Khedive their sovereign, as whose friends and supporters ■■■ English were there, and added that any violence would certainly be visited ■■■ them ■ hundredfold with the utmost severity. A sullen silence succeeded, broken only by the thwack of the cane and the howls of the victims until the punishment was complete.

When it ■■■ over we had ■ carriage called, and mounting with my prisoner and Mr. Montresor, a policeman with loaded rifle on the box, and Mr. Burleigh riding alongside, ■■■ drove at ■ walk through the dense throng of the Karmouss wolves back to Alexandria. The Egyptian officer, as ■■■ ■ his duty ■■■ performed, asked to be excused, and clapping spurs to his steed, ■■■ quickly out of sight. As ■■■ as ■■■ reached one of our Guards ■ held a "drumhead" on my friend and gave him four dozen with the cat. He went out smiling, but half an hour later he came to the ■■■ where I was writing, a changed ■■■ His complaint ■■■ that the sailors, on making his toilet, had taken all his money and ornaments from him, and "surely the thrashing was enough punishment for the words he had spoken." On this

I gave him ■ pungent lecture ■ the enormity of his offence, telling him that he might thank Allah all his life that he had not been shot and laid out by the side of the other man at Karmouss on the spot; and then sending for his purse, rings, and chains, which had only been deposited in a place of safety, I turned him out. Next year that Sheikh ■ to ■ in Cairo with little presents and admitted the justice of the lesson he had received, ■ that we ■ always the best of friends afterwards. Thus ended this episode, ■ striking instance of the moral power of the Western ■ the barbarian, though it ■ not one to be proved too often, ■ I remarked when reporting the circumstances to Lord Charles, with ■ request that if any more ■ had to be shot at Karmouss by the Egyptian police with Englishmen present, it might be advisable also to have ■ strong English guard.

I believe, however, that this was the last of the executions, though flogging for petty offences in the town went on ■ little while longer. The extreme utility of the old cat-o'-nine tails and triangle was thoroughly demonstrated on this occasion. No man who has once tasted it is ever likely to ■ the risk of ■ renewal of the acquaintance, and the whole circle of his friends or of those privileged to witness its operations are equally certain to avoid its caresses. At Alexandria there ■ ■ amateur official who once expressed a wish to witness ■ flogging, and asked to have notice given to him of the next one. After seeing the ■ triced up, the leather collar fitted on, and four or five cuts administered, he had, however, satisfied his curiosity, and hastily went out and swallowed a tumbler of neat brandy. The difficulty with our men was to persuade them to lay on the cat effectually. If given by a strong man and an artist with ■ will, I doubt if the stoutest sinner could stand more than a dozen without losing consciousness. After that it is mere cruelty to continue. One or two dozen, ■ delicately applied, would probably have far greater effect, as the first two ■ three lashes, if heavily and scientifically thrown on, completely numb all subsequent sensation.

I regret keeping ■ notes of this time, but perhaps the reader has had enough of the horrors of ■ fortnight whose memory always comes back ■ a sort of nightmare of fire and blood. It must, nevertheless, be ■ satisfaction to have been one of the comparative handful of Englishmen who, under Lord Charles, gave the Egyptians their first taste of our ideas of justice and order. During the whole of the short space that I was attached to my naval Chief he gave ■ an almost free hand in every civil question, and the most unstinted and unlimited support whenever asked for. It ■ nothing but pleasure to work for such a superior, who, whilst he took all responsibility, gave me practically full authority to act as I pleased in all civil matters, rarely, and never without cause, found fault, and, which is too seldom the case, was always ready with generous approval. If that fortnight is not good to look back upon in any other light, it will at anyrate be perpetually remembered with gratitude towards my genial Chief.

No sooner ■ Alexandria quitted than we learnt of the intention to send Sir Garnet Wolseley out in command of ■ expeditionary force to quell the "Arabi insurrection." During the recent operations I must confess that my sympathies had been much more with the so-styled rebels than with the Khedive, who had played ■ sorry part, and up to the last moment had certainly encouraged them to return the fire of our fleet; but it seemed to suit our policy to use him for ■ stalking-horse, and as ■ servant of the Foreign Office it was not for me to have an opinion, but merely to set myself to do what was ordered, and that with all my might. In about three weeks Colonel Gordon replaced Lord Charles Beresford as Commandant of Alexandria, and the stricter red-tapeism of a military dictatorship supplanted the rough-and-ready methods of the navy. For ■ few days I ■ under ■ Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, and my energies, which had been brought up to high pressure, were slowly allowed to lapse back into ■ supervision of interpreters and loot. But the toga had altogether been put into the background by the sword, and I had nearly forgotten that I belonged to Downing

Street, so familiar ■ uniform, boot and spur, the pass-word, and the habit of taking and giving orders. Sir E. Malet had gone home, Mr. Cartwright was in official and nominal charge, with Sir Auckland Colvin really holding the reins, and I seemed to be definitely detached, to my infinite delight, it need hardly be said, from cyphers and archives. It was ■ that I had my third fall, and whilst nursing my wounded rib and arm ■ best I could afford, I ■ summoned to the presence of Sir Garnet. Being still the only available public servant with any respectable knowledge of the language and country, I ■ pretty sure of employment; but so fearful ■ I that my crippled condition might stand in the way that I abandoned my sling and presented myself to our present Commander-in-Chief as an "able-bodied." He put a few pertinent questions to me, and in less than ten minutes I was on the Intelligence Staff under Sir Redvers Buller, with instructions to collect and organise as quickly as possible a competent body of interpreters, of whom I was to be the chief and superintendent on the H.Q. Staff. If I remember rightly, two days were given me to do this and to make all my own arrangements for the coming campaign. Within the allotted time I secured about one hundred and twenty men, more or less qualified, and reported myself with two very good horses chosen from the best I could find in the place. One was ■ whole brown, eight years old, half bred, big in the bone, deep in the chest, and sound ■ ■ bell; the other, a thorough-bred grey, four years, rather light and skittish, and very fast, but with slight splints, which troubled him now and again. All the rest of my equipment I was able to draw from stores, and my few odds and ends of clothing and suchlike went into a small valise. I was given a soldier servant and attached to ■ of the Intelligence Messes, with pay at the rate of about three pounds ■ day, so I was rather pleased at my novel position.

The political situation ■ then very curious, and nobody exactly knew whether we ■ making war ■ our own account, or that of the Sultan, ■ of the Khedive.

The Arâbi army ■■■ always called rebel, but invariably treated ■■ fair belligerents. All that we really cared about ■■■ that we had ■■ enemy and a nice country to fight in, ■■ that everybody ■■■ in the highest of spirits. Posterity alone can judge of the wisdom of that campaign. Its immediate and continuing consequence has been to earn for England the bitter enmity of France. As long ■■■ remain in Egypt, so long must ■■ be prepared to encounter French hostility at every step. The interests of France are far more sentimental than material in Egypt; but the French ■■■ ■ sentimental people, and our presence in possession of the land of their Canal is an open ulcer ■■ their pride, in spite of the financial benefits accruing thereby to Parisian bondholders and other financiers with capital in Egypt. As for our ■■■ interests in occupying the country, I failed to see them. ■■ may be very dense, but ■■ prolonged residence in the land of the Pharaohs showed me only the benefits ■■ conferred ■■ the native and foreign population without any relatively superior ones for ourselves. On the contrary, we spend huge sums of money in ■■ country from which ■■■ draw nothing, and ■■■ keep an Achilles' heel inviting the arrows of our jealous Continental neighbours. The experience of the first war, if it taught us nothing else, clearly proved the uselessness of the Suez Canal as a waterway in case of war with ■■ foreign enemy. In fact, it may be taken for granted that not a single man or horse or sack of grain would be sent through it if hostilities were begun with France or Russia either in Egypt or the Far East. Indeed, with the increased speed of our large ocean-going steamers the saving in time would be trifling between transport through the Mediterranean and down the Canal and despatch round the Cape, without reckoning the thousand and one risks of vessels in the Mediterranean and Canal waters. Beyond her European carrying trade, which would always be in danger in ■■■ of war, England has no further interest in the Mediterranean, and I am not alone in the conviction that the time will inevitably come when Britain will recognise that her place in the world is as a great Colonial

and not ■ ■ European Power, and will withdraw from ■ ■ Eastern waters, leaving her quondam rivals to fight for the supremacy therein. Let us suppose, for argument's sake, that England retires from Egypt and from active intervention in Turkey, receiving as a compensation some point on the African coast opposite Gibraltar. The result would be that we should ■ longer have any subject for quarrel with France, who, ■ the other hand, would at once commence a struggle with Russia for naval command of the Mediterranean. We, with our stations at the Straits, could practically make the Mediterranean a *mare clausum*—a naval rat-pit for others. By no longer opposing Russia in Turkey there is ■ reason why we should not acquire her friendship, and nobody will deny that could such ■ alliance ever be established it would be worth a much larger sacrifice than our already moribund love for the Turks. Britain and Russia together could easily rule the world without fear of any possible combination against them. Another advantage would be that all the energy and strength we now waste in Europe could then be devoted to our colonies, and ■ could look ■ with indifference to the strife of the five other Great Powers whilst ever increasing our ■ wealth and prosperity outside their sphere of action. It is evident that the moment is not now very distant when we may be brought into conflict in Africa or China, and how much freer and more vigorous our policy would be if ■ were quit of the wretched Concert of Europe! The objection always made to the Utopia thus sketched is that we should lose our Mediterranean carrying trade, and that the millions spent in Malta would be useless thenceforth. This is only partially true. In case of war with France or Russia (or both, if the alliance is worth anything), our commercial ships would always be in danger in the Mediterranean, and our carrying trade in that sea would temporarily be suspended. Our fleet would have quite enough work to defend itself, and could do very little towards the protection of merchant vessels, let alone the fact that the bulk of our trade is with Constantinople and Russia, both

of which countries would then probably be enemies. In time of peace there should be no damage done to our merchant carriers by the fact that — were — longer in political rivalry and conflict with any other Power in Europe. As long — goods have to be transported, and as British ships are best able to meet the requirements of exporters and importers, the carrying trade will remain in our hands. As regards Malta, its value as a coaling station would certainly diminish if we withdrew from the Mediterranean. But this would especially be so only in time of war, when, if we had no interests to protect, we should have — need of a large Mediterranean fleet. In days of peace ships could continue to coal there just — they do now. To be thorough, though, we ought also to give up Malta or secure to it — sort of Belgian neutrality; otherwise it would always remain a vulnerable and tempting point for — enemy's fleet to attack. By holding Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, and Egypt, we are supposed to completely — the — route to India; but both of the islands would be sources of weakness if we were at war with France and Russia, and the Canal is by a consensus of opinion of experts no longer to be reckoned upon for transit in war time. It is invariably said that if we — to leave Egypt one week France would be there the week following, but surely this could be prevented by a solemn international agreement neutralising Egypt and the Canal for all time. But even if the worst came to the worst, I would go so far as to say that if France were to hold Egypt instead of us we should be the gainers, since she would then be in the unpleasant position we are now occupying, incurring European jealousy and enmity, and with a country to defend in — of war which would seriously cripple the effectiveness of her naval and land forces by the ships and — which would be required. A war cannot last for ever, and the tendency of our epoch is to shorten great conflicts. Let Egypt then be occupied by France. In peace our trade route to India would not be affected, and in war it would be closed for — long as hostilities lasted. It is only thus far that we should

suffer. The trade route through the Canal, and nothing else, since that artery is condemned for transport in war.

To put the most extreme case, we may give Constantinople to Russia, who will inevitably take it some day, Syria and Egypt to France, Macedonia to Austria, and the rest of available territory to any Power who may be able to grab it. We should then be friendly with France, and could arrange a *modus vivendi* with her in Africa, and with Russia in the Far East.¹ As long as ■■■ hold the North-West frontier ■■■ have nothing to fear from Russia, ■■■ if hostile, which she would have no longer any reason for being if we ceased opposing her in Turkey. It is quite time that the nightmare of Russian designs on India should be dispelled. Russia wants an outlet in the Mediterranean and nothing else nowadays, unless it be ■ port in the Far East for her Siberian Railway. The result of her obtaining Constantinople would almost surely be a sharp contest for Mediterranean naval supremacy with France, at which we could look on at least with indifferent eyes. Any Russian officer will tell you, as dozens have told me, that Russia has long ceased to have any designs on India, where ■■■ are far too strong. The intrigues periodically carried ■■■ in Afghanistan and the Pamir regions are merely feints and pin-pricks in return for our mistrust and systematically blocking attitude against her in Turkey. It is true that if such a partition ■■■ above ever took place we should lose political prestige in the councils of Europe, but such as it is that prestige has of late brought us nothing but worry in the task of attempting to maintain it, and if we could gracefully and voluntarily give up all pretensions to interfering in the ambitious designs of our Continental neighbours, I cannot perceive that we should lose thereby. If we could take up the stand of America—one of absolute indifference except where our material interests were concerned, with no political ■■ sentimental European policy whatsoever—I maintain that ■■■ should still, with ■■■ immense wealth

¹ ■ only consider these two Powers as factors, since Germany, strong ■■ she is in Europe, is impotent against England abroad.

and our overwhelming naval supremacy, which should be not only kept up but increased, be just as important ■ factor in history ■ in the past. Our Indian Empire would not suffer, and we should be able to direct the whole of our might to the consolidation of it, and of our Colonies. Though I am not sure that anyone has had the temerity to go to the lengths I have just done in imagination, yet far abler brains have conceived, and abler pens advocated the withdrawal from Egypt, and the *entente* with France and Russia as our true Greater England policy.

After this digression into ■ very wide field, I may return to my own little story again.

We had already engaged in a skirmish or two on the outskirts of Alexandria, but nothing very serious had occurred, and everyone ■ ■ tiptoe for the real business to begin. But the plan of campaign was still a profound secret, though worked out down to small details at headquarters, and the first ■ ■ was anticipated with feverish impatience.

CHAPTER IV

IT was on the 18th of July that the transports and convoys left Alexandria with sealed orders for Aboukir Bay. A general idea prevailed, and I purposely encouraged, that we were to have more bombarding, and the ships drew up that evening in battle array off the forts. As soon, however, as it fairly dark we hoisted anchor, and next morning found us at Port Said.

Just as I have abstained from giving more than a few personal recollections on operations hitherto, I also propose to refer my readers to official despatches and previous excellent works on the subject for the connected story of the campaign. On arrival at Ismailia the whole of that little town was already rapidly being transformed into a big camp. I at once took up quarters in the "Hotel des Bains," generally known then as "Bain's Hotel," whilst the Headquarter Staff installed itself at the "Châlet." Accommodation was very scarce, as may be imagined, and I had not been long in my quarters before more luggage began to arrive, followed by a very noisy and vulgar foreign contractor. I inquired what he wanted, to which he replied that he had to sleep there; and on my telling him he could not do so in it was my room, he said there was no other and therefore he meant to stay. Had he been civil I might under the circumstances have allowed him a corner, but as it was not I immediately offered him the choice of the door or the window as an exit, and his continued insolence pitched him out of the latter, to his intense astonishment. My first business was to equip my interpreters. I have had a good deal to do with soldiers, and I certainly would rather command the worst and most unruly regiment in the service than my

squad of about one hundred and twenty polyglots. Every ■ of them had to be furnished with ■ horse and accoutrements, ■ pistol, rug, water bottle, and other conveniences, for all of which I had to indent and hold myself responsible. Any commanding officer in need of an interpreter applied to me, and expected instantly to be supplied with ■ superfine article at a gallop. Some of them could not or would not ride, others disliked being under fire, and resignations were frequent ; but in one way and another requirements were generally met. When everything was over, though, I was rather taken aback by ■ official request to hand in to store again all the articles I had drawn out. At that time most of my lambs had long since returned to their homes, on whose walls I daresay these same warlike trophies are now hanging. At any-rate ■ seldom saw ■ interpreter again after once detaching him on duty to ■ regiment or other, and of course I had ■ control whatever, ultimately, over him or his equipment. After some correspondence I succeeded in evading this claim, though ■ daresay had I been a real soldier ■ should have had to pay for all that was missing. One of the initial difficulties discovered was the unsuitability of English horses for work in the deep loose sand, and likewise the imperative need for mounted infantry. ■ suppose because there was nobody else available, I ■ sent on a flying errand to Alexandria to purchase two hundred horses for this necessary arm. My instructions were to call on any or all the authorities at Alexandria, naval and military, for any assistance I might require, and to use all despatch in bringing back my beasts. I was to give not more than twenty-five pounds a head, and a credit on the Ottoman Bank was wired for five thousand pounds. Besides the horses for the M. I. several of the Headquarter Staff commissioned me to get extra chargers for themselves at fifty pounds apiece. ■ went up in the transport *Euphrates*, and on the morning after landing beat up the whole stables of Alexandria, and assembled perhaps a thousand horses in the Square. Here, with the assistance of two veterinary surgeons, I

chose my two hundred in ■ few hours, in most instances fixing my own price at an average of, I think, about twelve pounds apiece. For Sir John Adye, his son, Colonel Swaine, and others, I bought ■ few higher priced ones, but it was only for the Colonel that I paid anything approaching the fifty pounds. Curiously enough, his horse—a beautiful, strong-looking, weight-carrying white Arab—was the only ■ which did not turn out well. One of those I bought, a dark bay called “Bedouin,” won numberless races afterwards in Malta. As each horse was bought I registered him with his owner’s name, and gave the ■ ■ scribbled order on a scrap of paper for his money, which he could cash at the bank. The whole transaction scarcely took three hours. Then seeking the senior transport officer I asked for a ship. There ■ one just in with mules from Cyprus, but she ■ very big, and he shook his head at the proposal to send her down to Ismailia with nothing but ■ and my horses. My orders, however, ■ imperative, and next morning early ■ started. But ■ reaching Port Said, the transport officer there ■ outraged at the base idea of paying canal dues for such ■ freight, and ordered me instantly to disembark. ■ remonstrated mildly, but without avail, and with all my cattle ■ was deposited ■ the shore. I said nothing more, but going to the telegraph office wired to headquarters, and in very quick time orders were given to re-embark me again and send ■ on, ■ the horses were ■ vital question. So I triumphantly again took command and received the thanks and congratulations of everybody at Ismailia on the prompt termination of my mission. What with my cantankerous interpreters and my own duties as interpreter-in-chief, my days were now very full, and I was generally well tired when bedtime came. My arm too was scarcely set, and gave me considerable pain and difficulty, especially in mounting; but the life ■ exhilarating and fraught with pleasurable excitement. One night, soon after turning in, ■ orderly roused ■ with a message to report myself within an hour at headquarters. It was ■ dark march ■ we set out across the

desert in charge of two native guides, who themselves put under my care. The [redacted] knew nothing of their business, and took us a long distance [redacted] of [redacted] way, and the first thing the light revealed to [redacted] was the armoured train of the rebels. They had lately cut off the water supply, and this was a reconnaissance to see what [redacted] could do. The mounted infantry under Captain Piggott at [redacted] dashed off to attack and try and intercept the train, but could not succeed, [redacted] it steamed easily away, fighting as it went. We had besides Piggott's men the York and Lancaster Regiment, and a couple of guns under Captain Hickman—N. Battery, I think it was. The scrimmage with the train of course gave the alarm to the enemy, who [redacted] [redacted] visible in considerable force at Mahuta and half-way to Magfar, where [redacted] were. Our two guns [redacted] drawn up behind a little knoll not far from the railway line, beyond which was a flat piece of open ground between it and the Canal. Sir Garnet Wolseley and the whole of his staff were watching the Egyptian movements in a compact little group on the hillock by the guns when the first puff of smoke came, followed by a scream and a hurtle just over our heads and [redacted] explosion behind our backs. This first shell killed an artillery horse, nearly taking off its hind leg, and wounded [redacted] of the men. Had it been a shrapnel [redacted] that spot very few of the staff could have escaped. As it was, they all very discreetly shifted their quarters without delay. The story of Magfar can be seen in despatches. It was then that Lord Wolseley wrote that it was not consonant with the traditions of the British Army to retreat before Egyptians; but, nevertheless, had the latter come on, it would have been very hard for our little force to hold its ground. Up till noon the labour at the two guns was tremendous, anybody and everybody assisting. Having only come out too with the intention of an early morning reconnaissance before breakfast, nobody had brought provisions, and [redacted] the day [redacted] on we suffered a great deal from thirst. The piece of open sand between us and the Canal was incessantly swept by a heavy fire, and finally [redacted] cast lots

from time to time as to who should gallop across, slung about with water bottles, and ■ them. It fell once to me to do so, and I ■ extremely pleased when I got back. I think Captains Wardrope and Adye had the same ticklish experience. Though I had already seen and heard a good many shell and bullets whistling "around," ■ our cousins would put it, I had never before been ■ deliberately under fire, and I confess that for the first hour or ■ I did not like it at all. And though I have known a certain amount of battle since, the more I see the less I enjoy it. There is something ■ beyond all control in the flight of projectiles, especially of ■ rifle bullet, that I cannot admit any display of courage in pretending to be pleased at fighting it. A stern ■ of duty will make any man lead a charge or a forlorn hope, and I am not aware of ever having shirked a hot corner where I was wanted ; but any old soldier who says that he is not delighted to find himself alive at the end of a stiff day is either a perverter of the truth, a fool, or tired of life. Nevertheless, the fatalist feeling is inborn with most of us, and at Magfar, late in the afternoon, I fell asleep on the sand with a pipe between my teeth, and waking up, turned over to ask a gunner who had been next me for a fresh light ; but he had been carried away wounded by a shell that had not even disturbed my dreams. Later on, Captain Fitzroy arrived ■ the scene with some Gatlings, and the enemy, who at ■ time had almost seemed inclined to ■ to close quarters, sheered off. Just before sunset, too, the Guards appeared, very tired, having had ■ true British lunch before starting, which caused about half of them to fall out. As it turned to twilight I mounted to ride back, and on the way overtook a solitary horseman wandering in the desert, who, to my surprise, proved to be the Duke of Teck. He had in some manner been separated from the rest, and lost his way. It ■ extremely lucky that we met, otherwise he might have strolled off into Arâbi's camp ; but, as it was, ■ clapped in our spurs, and regained Ismailia hospitality in time for dinner. The next thing to be done ■ to

turn the Egyptians out of Tel el Mahuta, where they ■ strongly entrenched on the banks of the Canal. This ■ accomplished without much fighting, ■ few well-directed shells scattering them in all directions out of their works.

Again it was very hot, and the burning thirst that was on us made everybody ■ for the Canal. Personally, I dipped my face in and drank like a horse, just above the dam they had constructed; but hardly had I done so when orders came that the water was not to be used temporarily, and I ■ disgusted to ■ about sixty bodies dragged out from the bed of the Canal, where they had probably been intentionally thrown with ■ view to poisoning the supply. Then came Kassassin, whither at length the Headquarters pitched their tents three ■ four days before the final advance on Tel el Kebir. On the 12th I ■ sent in from Kassassin to Ismailia with despatches, and reached the camp only about five in the evening, somewhat tired with a ride of over forty miles through the sand. I had scarcely reported myself, however, when I ■ told to be ready at ten o'clock to accompany the General. Ever since I joined his staff Lord Wolseley had made ■ ■ rule to keep me close at hand, laughingly saying that Captain Rawson, R.N., who invariably carried ■ large ship's telescope, was his eye, and Beaman his tongue. Tents ■ struck soon after dark, and the troops began to take up their allotted positions. The General and staff left Kassassin about half-past ten to ride round the whole army and see that everything was in order. By about midnight this inspection ■ completed, and several of us lay down to snatch a few moments' sleep if possible, though the night was very cold, as it often is in Egypt at that time of year.

Soon after one, the word ■ given to attack, and the battle began. Lord Wolseley's own despatches give ■ account of the action, which it would be presumption to attempt to better. As we crossed the trenches the whole Egyptian army could be seen in the wildest confusion,

flying like ants across the plain in all directions. In Arábi's tent I found his sword, a fine pair of glasses by Ross, uniforms, and a mass of papers. Putting sentinels on, I rejoined the General on the bridge over the Canal, where he was already penning his report. Giving my horse "Brownie," who had been under saddle the whole of the previous day carrying me to Ismailia and back, a prisoner to hold, I returned to the field, in obedience to instructions, to see what information I might be able to pick up from the wounded. Some of these were in a most ghastly plight. I came upon one lying across the railway embankment with a bullet wound through both knees and a thumb, another in the thigh, and a third which had entered his side, glanced off a rib, and flown out through his throat. He made signs of thirst, so I poured weak brandy and water between his lips; but it trickled down his breast, through the gaping hole in his gullet. I bound this up, and also tore up his shirt and wrapped it tightly round his body, which seemed to afford him relief. He then managed to thank me, and to say that he was just climbing the permanent way when he was simultaneously hit by the three shots. His case was hopeless; but a few were worth sending in to hospital, where they received every attention. In about an hour I returned to report, when Lord Wolseley told me to mount and accompany General Drury Lowe to Cairo, where my knowledge of the place, people, and language might have been useful. Poor "Brownie" had already had a fair share of work, but I preferred him to "Silvertail," and with "Ay, ay, sir!" turned to obey. But the horse had disappeared. On interrogating the prisoner, he told me a Highlander had taken him away. I at once repaired to the Highland Brigade's mustering-ground, where I found great rejoicing, the men revelling principally in the fruits and breakfasts laid out by the Egyptians for themselves at the moment of the surprise. A big raw-boned sergeant was proudly caracolliug about "Brownie," who evidently did not relish the British hand. I at once ordered the man off, and asked him what he meant by stealing the horse. He

indignantly replied that it ■■■ Egyptian horse he had captured, and pointed to the *Djeem* branded ■■■ its flank. This gave some colour to his excuse, ■■■ "Brownie" had formerly belonged to the Khedive; but not only ■■■ he wearing a Service saddle, but a good bottle of Guinness's stout, which had been in the saddle-bags, was missing. It was not a moment, however, for finding fault, so I swung myself up and went back to the bridge. Here, however, perhaps rather to my relief, Lord Wolseley told me that a mass of telegrams in Arabic had been captured, and perhaps, instead of going on, I had better apply myself to them, so that for most of the rest of that day I ■■■ immersed in paper.

Everybody knows how Cairo ■■■ captured, and I may pass briefly over the next week, only saying that ■■■ after arrival I heard that Arâbi Pasha was ill at Abbassiyeh, and ■■■ my visiting him, found my quondam friend in ■■■ very bad way with fever. He was, however, quickly removed from the miserable little guard-house where he lay, and given the best medical attendance awaiting his trial.

For ■■■ full account of the proceedings the reader may conveniently be referred to Mr. Broadley's book, *How we defended Arabi*. Before they began, I terminated my service "under the colours," and ■■■ again transferred to the Agency. The period I spent in the field will always be ■■■ of the pleasantest amongst many pleasant recollections. On my calling to say farewell to Lord Wolseley, he was good enough to ask me in what manner I should like my services under him to be officially recognised. Already numberless decorations, C.M.G.'s and others, were beginning to be showered broadcast upon many who had hardly stirred a finger, and this so disgusted me, that instead of saying I should like ■■■ (which perhaps I might not have received), I replied that I wanted nothing whatever—I had been given pay ■■■ about Colonel's rate, and wished for no more. The General, however, pressed me to ask for something, and finally I said that, if I must claim ■■■ reward, I should be

glad, if possible, to retain the two horses which had carried ■ through the campaign. A stroke of the pen made them my property, and ■ couple of nags, with a pair of medals, were all my souvenirs of the war. It was, nevertheless, nobody's fault but my own; though, looking back upon it, I fancy ■ that I was not wise in my generation.

Scarcely had ■ quitted my blue tunic when ■ ■ attached to Sir Charles Wilson, who ■ watching the State trial of the rebel Pashas ■ behalf of the Government. This ■ ■ easy duty, as the whole business of the Court ■ transacted in Arabic, and I ■ expected not only to translate every document, and each question and answer, but also to pounce upon and denounce any attempt at irregularity. From the first it was ■ understood thing that the leaders were not to be capitally convicted, and besides attending Sir Charles Wilson, I ■ permitted to assist Messrs. Broadley and Napier, within certain limits, in *vivâ voce* interpreting between them and the prisoners, and in the translation of important necessary documents which they would not entrust to native talent. This suited me very well, as I was paid, I think, £60 for translating about a score of papers in ■ few hours. The most dramatic incident in the trial was when some of the accused complained that the chief pipe-bearer of the Khedive had fraudulently obtained admittance to their cells, threatened, and most grossly and disgustingly insulted them, saying that he had been sent to do ■ by his royal master. As British sentries were over the gates, this ■ a very serious matter. With great difficulty, and only by the exercise of diplomatic pressure, through Sir E. Malet, the pipe-bearer was compelled to attend Court. He there behaved most insolently, ■ ■ *alibi*, and said that if necessary the Khedive himself would support him. Three or four of the prisoners nevertheless persisted in their story. This alone ought to have been sufficient, according to Moslem law, to carry the point; but the Court was evidently in fear of the Palace. On my suggestion,

therefore, Sir Charles Wilson proposed that both parties should take the oath of Triple Divorce, the most sacred and binding in the faith of Islam, to their statements. If all agreed to do so, the majority obtained credence. The effect of this oath is that the ■■■ is *de facto* divorced from his wife or wives, and his children become illegitimate, if he is convicted of falsehood. The prisoners professed their perfect readiness to submit to the ordeal, but the Chiboukjee paled before it. The Court adjourned to consider the question. I have every reason to believe that Sir Charles Wilson spared no effort to have this matter thrashed out, but it did not suit ■■ diplomacy indirectly to blacken the Khedive, and it ■■■ allowed to drop, although the impression publicly created by it ■■■ most unfavourable.

The entire trial was to my idea more or less of a farce. There were guilty individuals who had incited to rebellion, but most of their acts had been complacently covered by the Khedive ■■ by their superiors. Arábi, at anyrate, ■■■ according to his lights totally innocent. Up to the bombardment he had been moving both with the Khedive and the Sultan. After that, I believe, he always had the approval of Yildiz and the whole country at his back, as against ■ nominal Khedive in the hands of the Infidels. He simply could not then act otherwise. Having throughout been treated ■■ ■ belligerent, it was absurd afterwards to talk of him ■■ ■ rebel. The first test of ■ rebellion is success, and as far as his rebellion went, if he ever rebelled against the Khedive, he was victorious along the whole line. He could not rebel against Europe, or England, to whom he owed no allegiance. As a dictator his conduct ■■■ blameless, and after having been for long in complete and undisputed authority over the land of Egypt, which before and since has always enriched every individual, from the highest officials down to the shadiest adventurers, who have ever had approach to its coffers, he went out of it ■ beggar, and Arábi's legal adviser had to buy bread and dates to keep his family from starving. A ■■■

eloquent commentary on the man's thorough honesty and singleness of purpose could not be imagined than ■ afforded by ■ visit to the humble house where his family ■ almost starving. This is ■ question, however, which has been worn threadbare. Arâbi was only another victim to the needs of international diplomacy.

The entire circumstances, however, so annoyed and vexed me that I determined to quit the service of the Foreign Office. I could not agree with either the ends to which I ■ employed or the manner in which my special knowledge was used, and I specifically disliked the work and the prospect of spending the best years of my life in some outlandish Turkish vilayet. I daresay I ■ wrong, but I have not regretted the decision. In view of my approaching resignation, I asked to be taken off the trial duty, and after some difficulties my request was acceded to by Lord Dufferin, who had been sent out ■ High Commissioner. He expressed regret at my resolve, and even went so far as to try and dissuade me from it. I remained firm, however, and his lordship almost equally so in his refusal to accept my resignation. At length he said that I had better think over it for ■ while, and in order to give me time to do so, he named me to accompany Colonel Chermiside in ■ tour of inspection of all the prisons of Egypt. On my return, I ■ invited to dinner, and asked if I had not changed my mind. I ■ unable to answer in the affirmative, and so ■ requested to notify the fact in writing, thus closing my official

¹ In reply, I received the following despatch, which I only publish because, for ■ time, a story ■ most industriously circulated that I had been "kicked out" of the Service :—

"CAIRO, December 10, 1882.

"Sir,—I have duly received your letter of the 8th inst., in which you tender your resignation of your appointment ■ Assistant in H.M.'s Consular Service, and which I have forwarded ■ Earl Granville.

"In acknowledging your communication, I desire to express my regret that the Embassy ■ Constantinople should lose your services.

"While attached ■ Sir E. Malet's staff in Egypt, you have been called

As I had ■ private means, and less than ■ hundred pounds in hand, the step I ■ taken seemed rather a rash one, and it behoved ■ without delay to devise some way of making money. The ■ which most naturally suggested itself ■ to turn my knowledge of Arabic to ■ At the present day there ■ hundreds of officers and others in Her Majesty's Service having ■ very fluent acquaintance with the language, but at that period I was ■ of about half ■ dozen official Britons with ■ real "possession," as the French call it, of both the written and spoken tongue. One of the rules of the new Egyptian Army was that the English officers should pass ■ Arabic examination, and I therefore offered to teach and prepare any of them for the test. Amongst my first pupils were Colonel Rundle, now Chief of General Kitchener's Staff, and Colonel Parsons, at the time of writing commanding troops at Suakin. Colonel Taylor, who commanded Lord Wolseley's escort during the war, and afterwards formed the Egyptian cavalry, ■ also one of my most assiduous scholars, and both he and Parsons secured the £100 bonus for proficiency. Colonel Rundle, I regret to say, ■ developed any very brilliant linguistic capacities, but he was already quite sufficiently distinguished as a soldier.

At this moment Cairo was full of newspaper correspondents, and the representative of the *Standard* was Mr. V. Chirol, whom I had known previously in Beyrout. Upon his departure, he suggested that I should temporarily keep that paper informed of what ■ going on, and thus began ■ connection which has continued ever since with the greatest satisfaction—at least to the writer. After ■ month's trial, I was offered a regular post as Cairo

upon to execute duties of great responsibility and importance, and on various occasions have been engaged upon very serious affairs.

"These duties you have always discharged with credit, and to the satisfaction of the various persons ■ whom you have been placed, including Lord Wolseley, Lord ■ Beresford, Sir Charles Wilson, and others, ■ I have great pleasure in putting on record my appreciation of your zeal and efficiency.—I am, etc. etc.,

"(Signed) DUFFERIN."

correspondent at £50, and, as far as money went, was already in a better position than I could have attained after ten years in the Consular service. Besides my correspondency, I was also entrusted by the condemned rebels with the management of their property, and in the name of Ali Fehmy Pasha, with the guardianship of his daughters, Jemileh and Fatmeh. Three of the exiles, Mahmoud Sami, Abdul 'Al, and Ali Fehmy, possessed good houses, which the Government made strenuous endeavours to confiscate. Ali Fehmy Pasha's little palace had been given with his wife, as her dower, to him by the Khedive, and in order to prevent forcible appropriation, I went to live in it myself, with Mesdemoiselles Jemileh and Fatmeh, in one of the wings. Jemileh was a source of considerable trouble and anxiety to me, and at one time I had great difficulty in preventing her from running away and clandestinely marrying a most undesirable individual. Altogether, I successfully resisted the attack on the property, where I entrenched myself for several years, until at last the Government gave in so far as to admit the right of the Pasha to the house on payment of half the rent to itself. As soon as this arrangement had been completed, I removed to lodgings, as I could not afford to give anything like a reasonable rent myself for one of the finest residences in Cairo,¹ which was quickly let to General Grenfell, and has ever since been held by the Sirdar of the Egyptian Army. The most satisfactory of my Wekilates was that of Mahmoud Sami, who was a rich man, and whose wife, Ain'adeel Khanem, was a clever and reasonable lady, who not only paid me for my trouble over managing her affairs, but from time to time made me handsome presents, such as gold watches, rings, etc. On the whole, though, these trusts were very onerous, and only brought me into perpetual conflict with the authorities, who considered the fallen "rebels" as fair loot. But if my connection with the Arâbi faction made enemies for me in high places, it also brought me dozens of offers from all sorts and con-

¹ The house contains about fifty rooms, large and small, with a beautiful garden, and the water rate alone was four pounds a month.

ditions of natives who ■■■■ claims, or wished to be protected against the Government.

The ■■■■ fact of being an "English lawyer," the only one in Cairo, ■■■■ of immense weight, and though I ■■■■ ■■■■ barrister, I was entitled legally to represent any parties anywhere except before the Court of Appeal at Alexandria. In ■ very short time my hands ■■■■ full of business, and I had to buy ■ safe to keep my documents and money. One of my chief opponents ■■■■ Borelli Bey, ■ clever and urbane Frenchman, chief legal adviser to the Egyptian Government; but though ■■■■ had many a stiff fight, ■■■■ relations ■■■■ always of the best.

To give some idea of the nature of my work at that period, take two days from my Diary, less than a fortnight after I had made my independent start:—

"Jan. 10, 1883.—Up six. Tahir people at ten with amended contract, which refused absolutely. Rode see Malet, Sinadino, Adileh Khanem, and Prefect Police. Then Tahirs again, insisting their form contract; I ■■■■ mine, and showed teeth. Precipitate bolt of young Tahir. Drove station, see Chirol off. Then Ministry Interior. Talk with Procureur Hishmet and Kahil Bey—apparently satisfactory. Promised remove guards Arâbi's house to-morrow. Back home—Arabic class—Taylor and Parsons—Home again, despatched telegram *Standard*. Dined Gardens—To Chermside, where music. Then to Princess Nazli—Prince Kiamil there. Home, 1.30 a.m.

"Jan. 11, 1883.—Morning to Interior after Commissioners. Then Daira—Saïd Moussa el Akkâd. To Malet. Lunch Gardens. Settled Tahir contract. Again to Commission. Pigeon-shooting at Ghezireh in my trap. Sent MSS. to Evans to copy. Conversation Sheikh Khalil on atrocities of Ferid Pasha. Case Hassan Sakr. Then saw Cartwright. Cards on Dufferin, Nicolson, Khedive. Dinner Club, Chermside and Schæffer. Opera, 'Madame l'Archiduc.' Supper. Bed, 1."

The ■■■■ programme substantially went on for the

next three ■ four months, by which time I had more clients than I knew what ■ do with. Between the Hakan-
niyeh and Ibtidaleh (or Criminal and First Instance native
Courts), where I withstood the combined talent of the
Arabic Bar, the Ghezireh tennis courts, and racecourse,
the Ministries, the Clubs, and the Theatre, I seldom
rested a minute from daybreak till midnight. My
safe ■ slowly filling with title-deeds, jewellery, and
little bags of gold, and altogether the world went very
well then.

Legal work in Egypt, especially before the native
Courts, is, or was, usually paid by ■ percentage or share of
moneys recovered. Besides this, however, I made it an
invariable rule to insist on ■ fee deposited in advance
by any new client. The following extract from my cash-
book will give some idea of the business:—

March 18th.—£500 from Alexandria prisoners.

" 25th.—£230 " " "

April 11th.—£90 from Hadji Khalifa as retainer for future work.

" 16th.—£142 and 6 gold bracelets, valued ■ £60, from Sheikh
Mahmoud.

May 18th.—£300 from Sheikh Ibrahim.

In the next chapter I shall deal with the Alexandria
Court-Martial, but I may quote here ■ typical case, such
■ I had to fight over and over again. Though chronolo-
gically it ■ off somewhat later, it is most convenient,
perhaps, to cite it in this place. The facts ■ ■
follows:—

Hilmy Pasha, at his death, left three daughters—
Emineh, Zeinab, and Teffideh Khanems. Emineh Khanem
married Tewfik Pasha, Khedive of Egypt. Zeinab Khan-
■ married his brother, Mahmoud Pasha; and Daoud
Pasha Yeghen espoused Teffideh. The latter lady died,
leaving her property to be divided amongst her husband
and her two sisters, each of the latter inheriting about
■ hundred thousand pounds in land, and thirty thousand
in jewellery. Besides this fortune, Zeinab Khanem pos-
sessed property of her own, variously estimated at from

two to three hundred thousand pounds. The Khedive, at the death of Tefsideh, took upon himself to administer the share of his sister-in-law, ■ he said, to satisfy any creditors of the estate, or to prevent her husband's creditors from seizing any part of it, which they would not dare to attempt ■ long ■ he, the Khedive, ■ in charge.

Zeinab Khanem ■ young and extremely fond of pleasure and of the best and most expensive things of this life, and for several years she went on living recklessly ■ her own income, leaving the Khedive to encash the ■ of her inheritance. Amongst her hobbies was ■ passionate liking for horses, dogs, and carriages, not to mention dress and ornaments. As was inevitable, she soon fell into the hands of Jew brokers and old women who go about from harem to harem to pander to the luxurious tastes of the spoiled and independent young princesses. As specimens of how these parasites trimmed their accounts, one man who had lent Zeinab Khanem £250, and procured for her ■ little brougham, two horses, and three dogs, sent in ■ claim for £10,000. A certain Madame Morpurgo, who had sold her ■ furniture and other odds and ends, took her pen and wrote herself down for £28,000, and a dress-maker was modest enough to ask only for £12,000. This was, if I remember, a Madame Coudet, to whom the Princess had entrusted four thousand pounds' worth of diamonds to be re-set, which she refused to give up without payment or promissory notes for her absurd bill. At last Zeinab applied to the Khedive to give her some of the money he had encashed from her lands, or to sell some of it for her to enable her to meet her creditors. The reply to her request ■ that ■ decree of interdiction ■ pronounced against her, and Tahir Pasha, keeper of the Khedive's privy purse, ■ appointed ■ her guardian. This interdiction is a powerful instrument provided for application to people who are mad or proved to be madly extravagant. In the latter ■ ■ schedule of debts has to be signed by the person in

question, or else he or she must appear in person and acknowledge them. As it was perfectly certain that Zeinab Khanem, who ■■■ one of the most independent and courageous of all the princesses, would never recognise these debts, Tahir Pasha simply got over the difficulty by forging her seal. One of the most terrible effects of being placed *en état d'interdiction* is that you can neither give nor receive, nor sign your ■■■ with validity. You are, in fact, dead and buried alive. It has always been the fashion to represent the late Khedive as ■ pattern of domestic virtue, but ■ good many of his relatives looked upon him in quite another light. In this particular ■■■ he clearly wished to defraud his sister-in-law out of her whole share of Teffideh Khanem's legacies, and to do ■ he closed her mouth by employing the most formidable legal engine in existence through his own creature, Tahir Pasha. When it was known that the Khedive himself ■■■ in question, no native lawyer cared to take up the ■■■; indeed, the unfortunate Princess ■■■ precluded by the fact of being in interdiction from signing a power of attorney. At this time ■ Polish barrister, Dunin by name, had just arrived in Egypt, and being a very pushing, energetic man, ■■■ anxious to make ■ sensational début, if possible. Knowing nothing, however, of the country or its laws, he ■■■ to me and suggested that together we should work the Zeinab claims. It seemed ■ very hopeless task, but ■■■ repaired to the Ghezireh Palace, where she lived, and craved an interview. As can very easily be understood, the Princess was at first very mistrustful, thinking that we might be merely another couple of hawks come to assist in the pluming. We refused to act at all without ■ absolute power of attorney, which we declared that we would prove valid in spite of the Abdin Palace folk; but Zeinab Khanem hesitated long before she could make up her mind to give such unlimited control ■■■ herself to foreign lawyers. Over and over again ■■■ were received, and harangued and expostulated with her, till ■ last she yielded and signed the procuration. Our first act was

then to publish ■ notice that the interdiction, having been obtained ■ ■ forgery, was null and void, and that any persons acting under its authority, either Tahir Pasha or those who received and paid moneys otherwise than through ourselves, would be held responsible, etc. etc. It may be imagined that this notice created an immense sensation, and at the same time we summoned Tahir Pasha to attend Court, have his forgery proved, and answer for his acts under the invalid interdiction. When we presented ourselves, we were of course told by the judges that ■■ powers ■■■ *vicieux*, and that we could not appear, since the signature of the Princess had ■ value. It is needless to enter into details of the desperate struggle that ensued. During its continuance every possible ■■■ of intimidation ■■■ used against Zeniab Khanem. Butchers and bakers ■■■ ordered not to supply her with food, and her horses were left almost starving in the stables, because nobody dared to sell her barley and fodder. For ■■■ time the curious spectacle ■■■ offered of the Khedive's sister-in-law being kept by an English business man in food for herself and household. Nevertheless, the brave ■■■ never lost heart, and indomitably declared that she would rather die of hunger than give in.

It ■■■ a very serious burden upon myself, as, with the exception of Mr. Egerton, then our Minister in Cairo, who sent the Princess ■ present of ■■■■ sheep to feed her at the Bairam, without which she would have had empty plates, nobody ventured to come to her assistance, and I had not only to fight her ■■■ legally but to finance her large household. At one time, so irritated was the Khedive, that it was noised about he intended to abduct her from her palace, and I applied for cavasses from the British Agency to be put ■ her gates. The scandal ■■■ ■■ colossal that at last the Khedive gave in, the interdiction was quashed, and the Princess became once more a free woman. Her affairs, however, were so complicated that I did not wish to continue the management of them, and after the great victory, ■ advised her to name

M. Carton de Wiart as her factotum. She did so with the happiest results, and in the end all her property, ■ most of it, was disgorged, and restored to her. She certainly deserves long to enjoy it, after the plucky stand she made for her rights.

CHAPTER V

BY the first State trial the principal "Rebel Leaders," ■ they were styled, had been saved from execution and deported for life to Ceylon, where they have since lived in spite of repeated efforts made by their friends to procure permission for them to return. The Khedive's Government ■ extremely sore at the intervention of foreign counsel, and the consequent check on its vengeance in the case of Arâbi and his colleagues, but it vowed to make the smaller fry pay double penalty. With great difficulty I succeeded in obtaining a procuration signed by Suliman Sami, Military Commandant of Alexandria at the time of the bombardment, Saïd Kandeel, Prefect of Police during the massacres, and subsequently, Saad Abu Gebel, Ahmed Hakky, and four others, to defend them before the Alexandria Court-Martial, or to name a counsel to do so if I should deem it necessary. Armed with this document, I ■ once applied for ■ to the prisoners, for the purpose of preparing my defence. This was on the 13th March 1883. My request was, as I had expected, refused without delay, and it ■ stated that no foreign lawyers would be admitted in the court. Thereupon I immediately applied to Sir E. Malet, and at the ■ time to Lord R. Churchill and Mr. W. S. Blunt, both of whom had promised to use their influence in England on behalf of these men. Nubar Pasha resisted for some time every effort, official and private, but on the 20th it ■ agreed that *properly qualified* counsel might defend. I therefore telegraphed to the Honourable Mark Napier, asking him if he would undertake the brief for ■ sum of £250 for the month of April, with all expenses paid. This he consented to do, and arrived in Cairo ■ the 30th. The whole of April, however,

passed in fruitless endeavours to bring off the trial, as the Government, though profuse in their declarations of readiness, invariably met every fresh demand to ■■■■ day by saying that the *dossiers* were not yet prepared. Consequently, after spending ■ pleasant time with me, Mr. Chirol, who was out there again, and other friends, Mr. Napier pocketed his fee, and went back to England, leaving me again single-handed.

All through May I ■■■ frequently running up to Alexandria to interview my clients, though as no charge had ■ yet been preferred, we were working rather in the dark. It was not till the first week in June that the Court announced that it would open ■ the 15th, and communicated the indictment. Most of the prisoners ■■■■ accused of treason with a request for the death penalty, and excitement at once began to ■ high. Borelli Bey, who had a great deal to do with the case, assisted ■ materially at this juncture, and ■ believe secretly sympathised in a fashion with the prisoners. I remember his saying to me, "*Je donnerais ■ demission pour defendre Suliman Sami. C'est mon rêve.*" His meaning was that if Arâbi had been let off, Suliman Sami, who had acted under Arâbi's orders, must necessarily be guiltless. Borelli Bey had felt very keenly the triumph of Messrs. Broadley and Napier, and had he had to defend Suliman, his line would have been to attack the verdict which had acquitted Arâbi, on whom he would have attempted to throw all the blame. As it was, there ■■■ clearly ■ fixed determination *per fas et nefas* to make this second batch the scapegoats of the first. Indeed it was not long before I received good information that all the members of the court-martial had already, before the sitting began, or before they had any official knowledge of the cases, sworn ■ the Koran to condemn them all to death. ■ immediately reported this in writing and challenged the whole Court, which was dissolved and reconstituted in consequence, though the new members doubtless ■■■■ imbued with exactly the same *animus*, if they had not ■■■■ the same oath. The expenses

attendant on the defence were very large, as a number of clerks and translators had to be employed; and I kept continually travelling between Cairo and Alexandria, not to mention daily telegraphing to London, the cost of which was generously borne by Mr. Blunt. On the 14th June a mine was sprung upon me in the shape of an entirely new indictment, and also an intimation that I should not be allowed to cross-examine witnesses. This called forth another vigorous protest from the defence, and a grand preliminary skirmish, in which honours were pretty evenly divided.

At the last moment Suliman Sami seemed disinclined to confirm his procuration, and I discovered that agents from the Government had been secretly admitted to him and had tried to persuade him not to employ an English counsel, saying that he would only endanger his case by so doing, and that if he simply trusted to the "clemency of the Khedive," he would have nothing to fear. The wretched man likewise objected to my demands in the matter of fees. He was possessed of very considerable wealth, and was by far the richest of them all. I had fixed a sum for each in proportion to his means, defending one for nothing, and taking merely nominal amounts from others. But from Suliman Sami I refused to accept less than £2000. He bargained and haggled over this, offering £1000, then £800 plus a house on the Mahmoudieh Canal valued at about £1200, and so on until I lost patience, and told him plainly that unless defended his life was not worth a piastre, but that he was the best judge of the price of saving it. As far as I was concerned, he might hang with my best wishes. He was a surly, ill-conditioned creature, and in reality I cared very little what he decided. Finally he opined that he would trust to Providence and the Khedive, and told me so. Before it was light next morning he was taken to the Court, tried and sentenced with alarming celerity, and led out to execution. On the way through the streets a friend of his managed to pass him some poison, and he was already almost if not quite dead before the noose was arranged

about his neck. This judicial murder caused ■ great sensation, and caused ■ most animated debate in the House of Commons. It also served largely to protect the remaining prisoners from anything similar by the horror it aroused. In fact, subsequent proceedings degenerated into a series of wrangles between the Court and the defence, and actual trial there can scarcely be said to have been. A resolute attempt was made to fix the entire responsibility for the Alexandria massacres upon Saïd Bey Kandeel, Prefect of Police, under the new indictment, but I met this as Borelli Bey would have met the charge against the defunct Suliman Sami, by throwing any blame there might have been on the shoulders of his superior, Omar Pasha Loutfy, the Governor-General of Alexandria, and ■ creature of the Palace. The Court absolutely refused to allow me to cross-examine their witnesses in any ■■ tending to inculpate Omar Pasha, and so exculpate Saïd Bey. They also declined to call Omar Pasha himself and submit him to examination. On the 28th June ■ tremendous scene occurred in Court, and I declared that the whole trial ■■ ■ farce under such conditions, and that I should throw up my brief and refer the matter to the British Government, which had promised my clients a fair hearing and justice, and would certainly see that they got it. The Court ■■ aghast, and after ■ heated argument for another hour or so, adjourned. I think it ■■ the next day that the most serious charges were tacitly abandoned, and ■ sort of compromise arrived at whereby all the prisoners were condemned to short terms of imprisonment only—a termination which filled them with grateful astonishment and perfectly satisfied me, though it was an intense disappointment to those who had confidently reckoned on capital sentences. It ■■ towards the close of the court-martial that cholera broke out at Rosetta and Damietta. The *Standard* wished me forthwith to proceed to ■■ or other of these places, but my duty to my wretched clients, who would inevitably have met the ■■ fate as Suliman Sami if left to themselves, precluded my doing ■ Mr. Mudford, thinking

probably that this merely for not facing the cholera, briefly informed me by telegraph that if I preferred my own interests to those of the paper, I had only to a date for our connection to cease. I replied by naming a week from that day. As soon, however, as sentence was delivered, I took the first train back to Cairo, where the disease had just declared itself with great virulence. I had already asked Mr. Clere, who formerly used to correspond for the *Standard*, to send a message two pending my arrival, and on reaching the capital I found he had already despatched two lengthy wires of than a column. I fully expected remonstrances from London, but if my tenure of the post in Cairo was so soon to cease, I resolved to go out like a rocket, and continued to send the most detailed and gruesome accounts of what going on. There at least lack of material, and furthermore, I was the only real correspondent left in Cairo, all the rest, in common with the of foreign residents, having fled precipitately at the first alarm. Entreaties and threats from the other end of the wires useless to restrain them, and I was left alone in possession of the field. Such good use did I make of the opportunity that when the date fixed arrived, and I telegraphed asking to whom I should hand over my charge, Mr. Mudford replied most eulogistically, and begged me to continue as his representative. This is the only occasion which I have ever had any friction with my kind and esteemed chief, who has always treated me rather a friend than an employer, and whom I have to thank for numberless acts of generosity and consideration. The epidemic raged with intense violence for nearly a month, and gradually died out by degrees, the first day on which no deaths occurred being the 23rd August. During this period I working day and night, visiting hospitals and cholera camps, cemeteries, and private houses, and assisting best I could the cholera committees formed to combat the foe. As might have been expected, I before long attacked myself; but though I suffered acute pain for a while, the bout was not a serious one, and

over in a day or two. Two of my servants died, and the quarter of Bab el Look, in which I lived, was one of the most severely tried. This was my first experience of cholera, but since then I have often been face to face with this much-dreaded enemy. My own theory, based on an experience far larger than that of most doctors, is that when an epidemic is in full swing, everybody who is in contact with the sick necessarily absorbs a certain quantity of the germs. It will almost always be found when cholera is about that men suffer from intestinal disorders. This is cholera in an incipient form. If the constitution is strong enough it throws off the quantity of germs it has assimilated. If, on the contrary, it is weak naturally, it runs down by fatigue or worry, cholera declares itself in an acute form. The strongest and finest constitution may, of course, succumb to a sufficient dose of germs, but with ordinary precautions, especially as to water, one need not absorb any very dangerous amount. Water, after being boiled well, should at once be placed in stoppered bottles. It is perfectly useless to leave it in decanters or open jugs where dust charged with germs can and will almost immediately contaminate it afresh. In civilised places it is much better to drink only mineral waters, and, it may be added, to use the same for brushing one's teeth, as there are many people illogical enough most carefully to boil water they intend to mix with whisky, but to use the raw article unconcernedly for toilet purposes. The most usual cholera medicine is raw or burnt brandy, with ginger and laudanum, to be taken after a preliminary dose of castor oil has been successfully exhibited. Really good pure opium half-grain pills taken at intervals are also useful, and, together with ginger tablets, can always be easily carried in the pocket. A bad case, though, when the epidemic is at its apogee, leaves very little chance for treatment or hope. Of course there are recoveries, but they are few and far between. There will always be some days when every seizure almost proves fatal. These generally last about a fortnight after the commencement of a visitation. The forms taken by cholera are very

various, and during this Cairo cholera of 1883 cramps and spasms ■ seldom absent. In Russia in 1892 they ■ less remarkable, and in the Soudan in 1896 it ■ quite exceptional for ■ patient to suffer the agony generally associated with the idea of this malady. Then there was nothing but a sudden collapse, defying all counteracting medicines; though it ■ noticed that in the case of Europeans accustomed to spirituous liquors large draughts of brandy had scarcely any corresponding reviving effect, whereas with natives much smaller doses would occasionally produce at least temporary restoration of vitality and energy. As a rule, when ■ collapse has ■ in, there is small prospect of recovery. The whole system ■ paralysed, and first the extremities and then the trunk grows icy cold. It is ■ curious physiological phenomenon that a body, cold as marble whilst still instinct with life, grows warm ■ after death has ensued from cholera. I had often heard this stated, and put it to the proof in Russia when visiting one of the cholera wards. A patient still breathing had no warmth whatever in his frame, and touching him was as if one had touched ■ stone. Half an hour later, coming through the ■ ward, his face was covered, but on placing my hand on his chest, it communicated an ordinary human degree of heat. Dr. Botkin, who ■ with me, assured ■ that he had often observed this circumstance. One of the chief predisposing ■ to cholera must certainly be considered to be fear. I have known several instances where the individual simply frightened himself into his grave. *Per contra*, the best preventive is cheerful company and a stiff backbone. In this connection the services rendered in Cairo by an Italian dramatic troupe which used to play through the whole of the summer in the Ezbekieh Gardens can hardly be exaggerated. All round the gardens huge sulphurous bonfires were burning in the streets, and the city ■ ■ veritable city of the dead and dying, yet these brave and merry ■ and daughters of Italy provided laughter and amusement night after night for all who cared to come and listen. It may be thought that this ■ not exactly

■ time when men wished to laugh ; but on the contrary, it is on just such times that they loathe sitting in twos and threes, with ■ conversation inevitably recurring to the horrors they have been witnessing all day, and anything which offers ■ chance of momentary forgetfulness by transporting them in thought elsewhere is a real boon and blessing. When it was all over I thought ■ might take ■ holiday, and in September came home to England for a month or so. One of my first visits ■■ to Lord R. Churchill, where I met the other members of the Fourth Party, then ■ prominent political factor. It was suggested to ■■ to stand for Parliament, but that was never one of my ambitions ; and though during my stay I ■■ many public men, and had interesting conversations with one and another, principally on the Egyptian question, I very soon grew tired of London with its rain and fog, and it was with no regret that I ■■ found myself back at Bab el Look in my own, or rather in Ali Fehmy's, house.

There had been several changes in my absence, and Sir Evelyn Baring had taken the place of Sir E. Malet, whilst Sir E. Vincent had put on the cloak of Sir A. Colvin, and Mr. Clifford Lloyd had established himself at the Interior. I lost no time in calling upon the new-comers, and during the whole of my residence in Egypt I met with nothing but the most unvarying kindness and support from my official countrymen. In Lord Cromer it very ■■ became evident that the Egyptians had found ■ master mind and hand to direct them. Sir E. Malet belonged to the old régime, which ■■ ■ thing of the past, with all its faults and mistakes. Lord Dufferin ■■ ■ transitory power, ■ shooting star which left ■ brilliant track behind, but he had scarcely stayed long enough to create any very lasting impression. A more subtle, refined intellect probably does not exist to-day than that of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, and ■ ■■ kindly nature or ■■ winning ■■ no diplomat of our time possesses. But somehow the Orientals, whilst they could not help enjoying and admiring him, always, I think, failed to trust him, imagining it

■ TWENTY YEARS ■ THE NEAR EAST

quite impossible that anybody could be half as nice and charming ■ he always seemed. I know that ■ Constantinople the Sultan did not at all ■ for Mr. Goschen, but when Lord Dufferin came, his opinion ■ the "Ketcheh yuzli" (the "goat-faced"—the Turks always have ■ nickname for all and sundry) ■ beyond him. Mr. Goschen he could definitely understand and dislike: Lord Dufferin he never understood, and therefore disliked him all the more.¹ There can, however, seldom if ■ be any difficulty in comprehending Lord Cromer, and though at first he was perhaps not altogether popular, he has now firmly ■ universal regard and very general affection. Sir Edgar Vincent must naturally have had ■ considerable reputation to obtain the important and enviable post of Financial Adviser, but it was in Egypt that he gained his best laurels. Mr. Clifford Lloyd, on the other hand, was already a veteran, but in his long struggle against Egyptian abuses he had to contend not only against the native officials but also against many fellow-countrymen whose ideas did not coincide with his own. The result was unfortunate, and after fighting gallantly for a while he preferred to resign rather than modify his personal and very decided views. At the last it was in fact a question between his ■ Nubar

¹ When ■ H. Drummond Wolff was negotiating the Convention every effort ■ being made to induce the Sultan to send troops to Egypt. Lord Dufferin, then Ambassador, employed ■ his eloquence to this end, and a decisive council of Ministers was held ■ afternoon ■ the subject. Instead of sending his chief dragoman, the Ambassador himself, accompanied by two of his secretaries, went to the Ministry to hear the result. The Council ■ sitting, and hour after hour passed; but though he allowed his ■ taries to ■ to dinner, Lord Dufferin himself waited ■ At length Kurd Said Pasha, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, ■ out and informed our representative that it ■ with the greatest regret that the Sultan had not found it possible to ■ the wishes of H.M.'s Government.

"Well!" exclaimed Lord Dufferin, "you may be pleased ■ think that you have ruined my reputation ■ an honest man—but *you have made my name ■ a diplomatist.*"

What was ■ was that nobody would believe but that Lord Dufferin, ■ avowedly counselling the despatch of troops, had so given the advice ■ to lead to its rejection. ■ ■ the case—but that undoubtedly was the impression.

Pasha's withdrawal, and as England had greater need for Nubar than for Clifford Lloyd, it was the latter who was compelled to retire. ■ I think it is Sir A. Milner who says that Clifford Lloyd's objects ■ always right and his methods always wrong, and this accurately sums up the ■ of his fall, which was much to be regretted as ■ palpable blow to British influence in conflict with the Egyptian Ministry. It was, however, unavoidable ; indeed, the friction all round when the new English reform machinery ■ set in motion ■ tremendous alike in Finance, Justice, Interior, Sanitation, and Police. The exceptions were perhaps the army and brilliantly the public works, under Sir C. Moncrieff. The progress of Egypt is, however, no part of the scheme of the present modest volume, especially as anybody who wishes for a masterly, and at the same time delightful, history of the British occupation need only buy Sir A. Milner's book.

I had not been back very long before trouble began to break out in the Soudan, and in February came the news of Baker Pasha's Teb following on the annihilation of Hicks Pasha's army at Shekan in the first week of November 1883. The tale of El Teb is indeed a pitiful one. Before starting on that ill-fated expedition, Baker Pasha, whose acquaintance ■ had made when he ■ commanding the Turkish camp at Maslak, with the Russians enveloping Constantinople, informed me of his intention. Being ■ terms of ■ intimacy, I ventured to remonstrate ■ the rashness of taking ■ undisciplined and badly armed force of police and recruits against foes like the dervishes, remarking that it ■ almost certain death for him and them. His reply was simply—

“ I can only die once ; the sooner the better.”

Later ■ when I started and parted with ■ newspaper of my own, I wrote a series of sketches ■ public characters, amongst which was the following picture of Baker :—

■ Baker Pasha, though he is not of the race of prophets, shares their common fate, and is without honour in his

own country. In the Eastern exile, however, which he has imposed upon himself, he enjoys the high esteem of the lands of his adoption, and perhaps his quiet mind can afford to look with something like content ■ the smiles of the smug, whose mouths have held a silver spoon and a slippery tongue from the birth.

"Whilst he has acquired much of the appearance and outward manner of the Turk, Baker has retained the solid qualities of the English gentleman, and the habit of command belonging to a British officer. His distinguished services during the Russo-Turkish War are too well known to need recapitulation, and most people think he made a mistake in leaving Constantinople for Cairo. The step was certainly ■ hurried one, and ■ extremely displeasing to the Sultan. But Baker had been led to believe that he would be entrusted with the command of the Egyptian Army, and at that time the bait ■ tempting. His expectations ■ disappointed by the nomination of Sir Evelyn Wood, and Baker ■ only given the gendarmerie and police. The story of his experiences in the capacity he ■ fills is not ■ pleasing one; not a creditable one to anybody concerned except Baker himself. It is the narrative of ■ continuous uphill fight against the old abuses of ■ old system, wherein Baker has had to face not only native prejudices, but, ■ are sorry to say, English jealousies. And where he looked for support to the Foreign Office the bruised reed pierced his hand, ■ it generally does the unhallowed hands of all except its special protégés. Baker having been given the task of reorganising the police, everybody at once set about helping him in the job, on the principle that in Egypt other people ■ generally more fit for the work than those specially trained to it, *vide* several existing instances. The Domains and Daira, two gigantic farming and planting businesses, are administered by an Indian Civil servant and an ex-Vice-Consul from Milan. The post of Financial Adviser is given to ■ ex-Guardsman, the Directorship of Prisons to a London doctor, and the Slave Trade is to be checked by ■ gentleman who

travelled in Asia Minor, and never did anything else in particular except marry a relation of Nubar Pasha. These may be very good appointments (notably in two cases I believe they have been proved so), but the system encourages everyone to think he can do everything. And so Baker, who could have organised the police very well if he had been left alone, was perpetually thwarted by other people who thought they knew ■■■ about it. The result has been very much what we might have expected, a strange mêlée of good and bad, and a general feeling of uncertainty as to what the next move may be. Hitherto the police have ■■■ curious vicissitudes, the most extraordinary phase of which was Baker's Suakin expedition. Hicks Pasha with his army having been annihilated, and Osman Digna becoming rather a nuisance on the Red Sea Coast, Sir Evelyn Wood was invited to go down and 'smash' him. The Egyptian Army, however, did not feel up to the mark just then, and Sir E. Wood declined the offer with thanks. Hereupon Baker was summoned, and though it was only a month ■■ so previously that the greatest stress had been laid ■■ the fact that the police ■■■ ■ non-military body, in every ■■■ of the word, he was asked if he would take down his latest batch of recruits and fight the army's battles. With ■■■ valour than discretion Baker threw himself into the breach, and decided at once to go, urged on, I cannot help thinking, by the consideration of how personally sweet it would be if success should attend his forlorn venture. Meanwhile, the army looked on with mingled feelings. Baker's success would have been a very bitter pill to swallow, but having refused to tackle Digna themselves they could not complain if somebody else offered. The story is a most melancholy one, and we may pass over the disaster and the ugly recriminations which ensued as briefly as possible. Baker himself knew that nothing short of ■ miracle could save him, but he was desperate. He had very little to lose and he lost it, but he gained the reputation at least of being always 'ready, aye ready' when called upon.

"When the second campaign was begun, Baker again

went to Suakin, and gave his services to the British General ungrudgingly, merely for the pleasure of giving them and of fighting. The welcome shown to him by his old regiment, which he met for the first time after so many years, must have been especially gratifying to the old soldier, the more so that it was the only recognition vouchsafed to him by his compatriots of his work at the front. All that he has got to remember the plains of El Teb by is the bonniest decoration a man can show, which money cannot buy nor favour procure, a deep, wide smile in the face.

"As a commander, Baker is well known to the world ; as an administrator, comparatively few come into contact with him, and fewer still of the outsiders hear much about him. He is a firm disciplinarian and a good chief, looked up to with more than ordinary respect by his subordinates. He is very fond of his way, and generally gets it, except when the implacable Budget is brought to bear upon him. Having long since learnt to know what this means, Baker wisely refuses to kick against the pricks, and the Budget is the only enemy before whom he retreats, recognising the disparity of forces. In other matters Baker will allow as much discussion as others wish, merely calling for frequent cups of coffee and emptying his silver cigarette-case. But after the other side has had its say, Baker starts afresh from his original proposition, brushing aside and disregarding the arguments which the adversary had fondly hoped were making such a vivid impression, and never yielding an inch of the ground taken up."

From the [redacted] [redacted] I reproduce the following sketch of Nubar:—

"*‘‘ Huic maxime putamus malo fuisse, nimiam opinionem ingenii atque virtutis sui. ’’*—CORN. NEPOS.

"The words chosen for the heading [redacted] applied to Themistocles the Athenian [redacted] two thousand years ago. They fairly represent popular opinion of Nubar the Armenian at the present time. There [redacted] [redacted] good many points of

similarity between the two statesmen, in their natures and in their lives, but ■ hope the parallels may not be drawn out together to the end, for, ■ everyone knows, Themistocles ■ accused of peculation and ostracised. He then went ■ to the enemies of his country, and plotted with Artaxerxes against Greece, finally dying, poisoned by his ■ hand.

"Themistocles, says one of his biographers, was ■ man 'of great talents and little morality'; Nubar is a man of small talents and great immorality. But let it be distinctly understood what is meant by the foregoing phrase. Not that Nubar is endowed with ■ small amount of talent, but with ■ considerable collection of small talents. The greater and higher talents he has never possessed. In the same way Nubar scorns petty immorality. His scale of moral character is calculated on large bases. It is not worth his while to sin in small things. But it is when immorality grows so great that its perpetration calls for ■ common courage to undertake it that Nubar becomes a hero in his own eyes, though perhaps a sinner in ours, by boldly facing contingencies. If the courage required to perpetrate this greater immorality is rare, the quality required to denounce it is rarer, and herein lies the immunity. And so I repeat, Nubar is not a man of small morality, but rather of portentous immorality, at a pinch. Those who know him well enough will not question the truth of this, and those who do not may take it for granted that the words ■ not lightly written. Needless to add that I speak of political not private morals.

"If he is pleased to meet you, or wishes you to think so, Nubar Pasha is one of the pleasantest men the world contains. He will ask your opinion ■ if he valued it above pearls, he will listen to it as if you were the mouth-piece of the Delphic oracle, and he will laugh at you for one more dupe to his superior knowledge of human nature, whilst you ■ retailing to your friends that Nubar is the most intelligent Oriental you have ever met. Nubar has long since learnt the value of words exactly. They ■ very cheap with him, and he can buy a good deal out of

them. He has not yet learnt the full value of silence. He lives entirely in the present, and not a jot for the future—whether the future of to-morrow or the future of years. His nature is so many-sided that it needs a dozen different lights of different strengths, and from various points, to show up the bright parts and the shadows. The perpetual object of Nubar's existence is to show the right sides and to keep the wrong dark. From long practice in this juggling he succeeds in nine cases out of ten, and the spectator retires from the show dazzled with the radiance of his shining. Now and then, nevertheless, a ray penetrates where it was not wanted, and an unbeliever goes out from the presence. But what is one amongst many?"

"The outer gives little clue to the real one. A ruddy face with grey moustache and grey hair escaping from the tarboosh always pushed over the left ear, which is deaf, to give a better chance to the right one, which hears, when it wants to—such is the countenance of Nubar. A kindlier and more paternal smile it would be difficult to imagine. And he is a kind-hearted man, always ready to do a good turn if it does not compromise him in any way. He is a staunch friend too towards a chosen few, but he has not many real friends amongst those of his own rank. One great blot in his life must always be the attitude taken by him towards the ex-Khedive Ismail, who, whatever his faults may have been, created Nubar.

"The Pasha is a good farmer and thoroughly understands agriculture, as practised in Egypt, being, moreover, always ready to take up any European improvement, an invention likely to turn out an improvement. He is fond of remarking, with a sigh, that he longs for the day when he shall lay down the burden of the of State, and betake himself to his *Abadiék*. There, instead of being bullied by Sir E. Baring, and worried or less by everybody, he will take a well-earned rest, broken only by a daily inspection the back of his favourite donkey. He is a director of waterworks, and will discourse learnedly

on the Cairo waterwork system to anyone who will listen. His pet delusion is that he is a jurist, and that he framed the Codes which ■ (not) in force. As Minister of Justice he would do better, ■ cannot help thinking, in allowing people who know something about law to remodel the administration, rather than in sticking to the old order of things, because he imagines it his creature. On this subject, however, it is hopeless to approach him. To ■ up: Nubar is clever in small things, and takes credit for cleverness in bigger ones by his very mental agility in the minor. He is ■ almost unerring judge of men, and it is very difficult to deceive him. He is a good master and not ■ bad servant, but extremely unsatisfactory in any other than these two relations. He is genial, and ■ pleasant, witty talker, but his information on most subjects ■ superficial. As soon as he finds that his interlocutor knows the subject better than he does, he is apt to change the conversation. Except ■ the rare occasions when he is completely in a bad temper, he is courteous and chatty alike to friends and strangers, at his home or in the Ministry. He speaks Turkish, Arabic badly, French well, and English a little. As long ■ he remains in power he will retain a fair share of popularity, for he does not abuse his position. When he retires to his Arcadian farm he will not be much missed. But England will lose in him ■ of the best allies she ever had in Egypt."

The above lines were written in 1884, but the description still applies. When in Cairo last year I left ■ card on Nubar Pasha, and two hours afterwards received a little note saying how delighted he would be to ■ me again, and that there would always be ■ place for ■ at his table whenever I cared to come to lunch or dinner. Next day ■ returned to see my old friend, who had not changed more than might be expected in the lapse of years, and if somewhat frailer than of yore, still as cheerful and cordial as ever.

After this lengthy digression, I return to the beginning of 1884. In January Gordon arrived quietly and unostentatiously on his last mission. He had always had

■ great and simple affection for the Khedive Ismail, and used to say that he ■ lay down to rest without remembering his old master in his prayers. When he reached Suez, Teufik Pasha sent down his Grand Master of Ceremonies, Zulfikar Pasha, to meet him and the Marquis of Ripon. Gordon, however, refused to shake hands with Zulfikar, and would not allow Lord Ripon even to go off in the boat sent for them. He also addressed ■ letter to the Khedive, adorned with ■ pen-and-ink sketch of two black men being flogged, reproaching him with being ■ bad ■ and an unjust man, and winding up with ■ remark that his sin would surely find him out. He only stayed two days in Cairo, and I ■ him but once. That was at the British Agency, where his ancient enemy, Zobeir Pasha, had been called to meet him. Lord Cromer, I believe, acted as a sort of arbitrator between them, and they parted practically reconciled. Later on we know that Gordon cancelled the decree prohibiting the slave trade, which so many of his years had been devoted to suppressing, and urgently recommended the despatch of Zobeir, the king of slave-dealers, as the only means of stemming the current of Mahdism. The opponents of slavery, however, were too powerful, and his request was refused. This was the death-knell of the Khartoum garrison, and we in Cairo at once recognised Gordon's danger. The sickening story of the delay in sending up the relief expedition, in spite of the repeated and strenuous representations of Lord Cromer on the value, not only of weeks but of days, has already been told and retold. The whole truth, however, will probably never be known, and the blame equitably apportioned, unless Lord Cromer himself chooses to publish it.

CHAPTER VI

I HAVE already mentioned Mr. Clere as having represented me for a day or two at the commencement of the cholera outbreak as correspondent for the *Standard*. He has lately published his own reminiscences over his real name, which sufficiently show his restless, yet vigorous character. He came to me one day with the proposal to start a newspaper in Cairo. I objected, that beyond telegraphing, and an occasional piece of descriptive letter-writing or criticism, I knew nothing whatever of journalism, much less of the management of a printing office. Clere, however, to adhere to the *de guerre* by which he was always known in Egypt, was quite confident in our joint ability to manage the paper, and undertook to oversee all the technical part of the business. As for printing, we could have it printed for us. This was contrary to my ideas, for I foresaw endless possible difficulties in giving out the work; and after considerable discussion and examination of ways and means, I decided "in principle" (what a delightful qualifying phrase that is!) to have our own press. Clere was to bring into the concern his knowledge and energy, and I was to find everything else. Though I had every belief in his capacity and good faith, I reserved to myself the most complete control over the paper, taking Clere on at a salary of, I think, £50 a month as sub-editor. Though older than myself, he agreed most good-humouredly, and entered into the preliminaries with all the zest of a schoolboy. Young as I was in years, a little more than half-way between twenty and thirty, I felt at this period far more aged than at the present day, and all the enthusiasm for the venture was entirely supplied by Clere. We kept our own counsel for some time, and it

not until the official application made to the Government for permission to bring out a daily paper in English and French that anything known about it. Here is the birth certificate of the *Times of Egypt*:—

“ Direction du Contentieux
des
Ministères de Finances
et de l'Intérieur.
No. 4007.

LE CAIRE, 1 Juillet 1884.

“ MONSIEUR.—J'ai soumis à Son Excellence le Ministre de l'Intérieur la demande que vous avez adressée à S.E. Nubar Pasha, Président du Conseil des Ministres, et Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, pour être autorisé à ouvrir une Imprimerie européenne au Caire, et à publier en langue française et anglaise un journal politique quotidien ayant pour titre *The Times of Egypt*.

“ En présence des engagements formels que vous avez pris devant M. le Gérant de l'Agence et Consulat Général Britannique, et des déclarations de M. Egerton, le Ministre bien voulu accorder l'autorisation que vous sollicitez, et m'a chargé de vous donner l'avis.

“ S.E. bien voulu également, à titre exceptionnel, vous dispenser de verser les cautionnements prescrits par les Art. 1 et 12 de la loi sur la Presse du 26 Mai 1881. Mais il est entendu que cette faveur d'une contravention et que dès lors vous tenu de verser sans délai, et sur simple requisition de l'Administration les dits cautionnements, ainsi que le montant des amendes que vous aurez pu encourir.—Veuillez agréer, etc. etc.

C. COLUCCI.”

The announcement of the approaching appearance of the *Times* was with a storm of ridicule and pitying prophecies of the fate in store for it. But this only had the effect of making more obstinately determined to try and achieve a real success. After consulting various technical authorities, we resolved to turn the ground floor of the house into occupying into offices, and once about making a solid foundation to support the weight of

the press. Clere had discovered ■ machine which one of the Khedivial family in ■ ■ of caprice had ordered out, but had ■ even unpacked, and which had been sequestered for ■ debt ■ other. It ■ ■ very fine one, and must have cost over £300. By exercise of diplomacy, though, ■ managed to secure it for, I think, £120. It ■ not of the usual Marinoni type, and we had great difficulty in putting it together, but at last ■ listened with satisfaction hard to depict at the smooth swish of its big wheel in perfect working order. As ■ foreman, ■ *prôte d'imprimerie*, ■ secured ■ very practical and honest, hard-working Frenchman, M. Joblin by name, who entered into our plans heart and soul, and contributed very largely to surmounting the formidable difficulties of our commencement, which were enough to discourage almost any man.

To begin with, I ordered a large and beautiful fount of type from Stephenson & Blake, but again the local compositors were not familiar with this species, being altogether educated to Marinoni and foreign material. Besides which, ■ of them knew English, and had to compose like machines, letter by letter. The first proofs which used to come in were such as have probably seldom, if ever, been seen, and they had often to be corrected ■ many ■ six ■ seven times. In the attempt to get together a staff of "comps," and to train them, nearly ■ month of incessant practice ■ wasted, and ■ then ■ undertook to publish the first number with great misgivings. As for the French part, I advertised for skilled translators, "with ■ thorough knowledge of English and French," and received about forty applications. I soon weeded these down to five ■ six, and then set them a column of the *Standard* to translate, sitting down myself at the same time. My translation ■ finished nearly ■ quarter of an hour before the quickest of theirs, and I placed them all in separate envelopes and sent them by hand to M. Camille Barrère, then French Minister, with ■ verbal request for him to be good enough, if he did not mind the trouble, to pick out the best. He returned ■ my own, and as he ■ a faultless English

scholar as well ■ ■ French *littérateur*, his judgment ■ ■ not likely to be wrong on such ■ point. I hesitated considerably before undertaking to translate ■ sheet ■ day, most of which I had also written first in English, but as it would save me something like £30 ■ month, I became my own translator as well as editor, leader writer, and business manager. Clere used to go out for ■ hour or two generally between ten and twelve, to get items of news, and the rest of the day he would be writing short notes, and hard at the endless correction of proofs. Happy English editors, with a huge competent staff of reporters, subs, readers, and all the rest, may possibly form ■ ■ faint idea of what it ■ ■ to combine all these functions, together with those of translator, cashier, and manager, in the persons of two poor wretched youngsters. Nevertheless, ■ met with ■ good deal of encouragement, in the way of subscriptions promised and taken, and advertisements, and at last Cairo ■ placarded with notices from our own press, heralding the advent of the *Times of Egypt*. As well ■ I remember it was the 1st of August.

In spite of all our almost superhuman labour, the first issue was ■ monument of typographical pie. The *Bosphore Egyptien* waxed hilarious ■ ■ the truly amusing and colossal blunders, and if the paper was bought for nothing else, it sold during the first week for the sake of its miserable and comical deficiencies. It used to come out about five or six in the evening, and then the weary proprietor and sub-editor would betake themselves to Santi's Restaurant in the Ezbekieh, and in some leafy ■ ■ eat humble pie. Neither of us, however, ever thought of giving in for a moment, and the more we ■ ■ laughed at, the stouter grew our hearts and the stiffer ■ ■ necks. By the end of August, though, we were beginning to improve the look of the *Times* very considerably, and as it had, for an Egyptian paper, an extraordinary amount of news, especially of war correspondence from the front, together with rather outspoken leading articles and paragraphs, things took a livelier aspect. Furthermore, the Headquarter Staff required their General Orders, which

■ very voluminous, printed daily, and their own little hand press ■ not fit for this. I, therefore, alone could help them, as ■ other press could do English work, and, borrowing a few soldier-compositors, whom I paid by the piece, we used, ■ soon as the *Times* was off the machine, to tackle the orders. Before long the superiority of the "Britannia Press," ■ we called ourselves, ■ recognised, and several of the Ministries patronised us, so that in September the grinding of the wheels, and the grunting of the Arabs turning them, went on from dawn to dark, and from dark to dawn. In spite of the ■ initial expenses caused by inexperience and blunders, our balance ■ very little, if at all, on the wrong side ■ the end of August, and by the beginning of October ■ had a clear profit of about £200. The next three months brought in close on £1000 clear; but this is anticipating.

No sooner had the rest of the local Press recognised that the laugh was coming round to our side than every device was used to break us. In Cairo, papers are sold, as elsewhere, by little street-boys. We gave ■ badges, and the rival boys, together with organised gangs of roughs, systematically bullied and beat our vendors, and chased them back to the office. This went on for some time, till we met force with force, and had our protection gangs. Finding that the sale could not be prevented, they next tried suborning our compositors, and ■ ■ confronted with strike after strike, although our ■ were paid nearly twice the usual wages. By hook and by crook, though, ■ always managed to bring out our evening issue, and gradually replaced ■ black sheep by importing ■ from Malta and Cyprus. We also found many skilful workers amongst the soldiers, who would come as soon ■ they were free, and stick to the frames for hours—often all night. One "Tommy" earned as much as £50 in one month by night-work, and most of my British compositors bought their discharges. I also had ■ Italian, who must seldom have made less than £30 a month. In October, Sir Evelyn Baring suggested the addition of ■ Arabic sheet to combat the attacks

of the *Abram* and other native papers. Again, I bought some superfine Arabic type, such as no native journal possessed, and added an Arabic staff. Very serious errors, however, used to creep in, I found, so that I was compelled, besides French, to take up the Arabic editorship, and read and correct every Arabic proof. The work of the "Britannia Press" was so heavy that I had to buy another machine, I Marinoni this time, together with a couple of hand presses for cards, business notices, bill headings, and suchlike jobs. Big bills for theatres, sales, etc., for placarding, also began coming in, and gradually it became evident that two could not physically endure the strain much longer. For the last three months of the year I hardly ever went to bed, merely lying down on a sofa in the office, and being waked up every half-hour or so with proofs. All day long the pen was in hand and the brain busy writing and translating, till human nature could stand it no more. We had fought the fight and won it beyond our expectation. The *Bosphore* was nearly ruined, and came to offer to sell us its press and paper—a proposal we had intense satisfaction in treating with the contempt it deserved. It was certainly very pleasant for me to be making about £300 a month, but it was impossible to go on, and taking outsiders in to do the work I was doing myself meant cutting down profits at once as well as deterioration.

On the 31st December, without telling anybody, I sat at my desk and wrote out, "*The 'Times of Egypt' will cease to appear from this date,*" and told the compositors to set this forth in their best type, and to post it to all subscribers. The first impression produced was that I had gone mad, the second that I was bankrupt. On the 1st of January every soul who had a claim on the "Britannia Press" produced it, and I should be sorry to say how many hundreds I paid out that morning. When I mounted my horse that afternoon and went for a wild gallop, I felt like a convict let out of prison. Hitherto I had only been able at sunrise to take a ride for an hour, and the rest of the day and night had been spent in the offices. Now, at

length, I was free again. It was true I had only been ■ slave to myself, but until ■ had made the *Times of Egypt* a solid success, patent as such to the world, it was ■ point of honour with Clere and myself not to give in. I think he must in his heart of hearts have been as pleased as I was to get rid of the task. Subsequent events proved how correct had been my estimates. I sold the paper and the press to Messrs. Rees & Roe, and they put in Clere as editor and manager. They were compelled, however, to employ ■ whole staff to do the duties we two had done, and from the day I left the office the business fell to pieces. The paper ■ removed to Alexandria,—in my eyes a great mistake,—and lingered ■ for about six months, when it died a natural death. Before this happened, I was asked if I would not resume the editorship at a big figure, but it can easily be understood that I declined. On its final cessation, Sir E. Baring also pressed me very strongly to revive it, offering, if I did not feel inclined to pay for it, to arrange matters himself, and guarantee ■ a fixed income, as he considered a paper such as it had been under my management was a desideratum as a mouthpiece for English views and interests, and to combat the French organs, which had then become extremely violent and insulting. For various reasons I regretted to be unable to accede to Sir Evelyn's wishes, and the matter dropped, leaving the *Times of Egypt* in its dishonoured Alexandrian grave.

Enough, and perhaps ■ than enough, has ■ been said about work in Cairo, so I may turn to lighter themes. As usual wherever ■ Englishman sets his foot, sports of all kinds began to be inaugurated. Into all these I entered with great zest, ■ may be imagined, for I always preferred play to labour. A racecourse and polo-ground, with tennis courts and ■ patron Sporting Club, ■ very soon started. As far ■ racing went, my share ■ very small, though I generally had three or four horses in training. I learnt most that I knew about horseflesh from Colonel Taylor and Principal Veterinary-Surgeon Beach, and though I ■ never much of ■ performer between the flags, I

acquired ■ thorough ordinary veterinary knowledge of animals, so much ■ that when contracting, ■ I did for ■ years, for the supply of animals, chiefly mules, to the Governmental departments, I was able to dispense with professional assistance in purchasing, which made ■ great difference in final profit.¹

The tennis courts were out at Ghezireh, but very inconvenient in many ways, so I suggested building a cement court in town. This was ridiculed, as the paper had been; but after getting some land from M. Suarez, I set about the construction. The subscription was to be £3 a year, and limited to fifty, to cover the expenses; but within ■ very short time I had eighty applicants, who ultimately increased to one hundred and twenty, and as I did not wish to ■ it for personal profit, it was turned into a Club, of which I ■ for some while treasurer. The most regular attendant ■ Lord Cromer, who seldom missed an afternoon with the lawn tennis racket. Our best player ■ Mr. Wallich of the Railways at that time. Recently he came ■ to Constantinople and carried off the Levant Championship Cup, and he and I in those days played for the Civilians, being beaten in the final tie at Cairo by Lieutenants Cotton and Prinsep—both, alas! now dead—representing the Egyptian Army.²

Another amusement a good deal in fashion ■ fencing. All the teaching ■ in the hands of some Italian *maestri*, from whom I took my regular lessons, until I thought I had learnt all they could teach. One of the most fervent amateurs whom I then met was Sir E. Vincent, who, from his height, reach, and strength, was always formidable. When starting my paper, though, I hazily foresaw

¹ The first mule contract I took was at ■ price of about £24 ■ head, and after two years ■ three, the last ■ I fulfilled ■ ■ £12, still leaving me about £2 a head to the credit side. ■ may be guessed how much ■ made on the first ■

² Last year the post of Inspector-General of Egyptian Telegraphs ■ vacant, and I hope I ■ betraying no secrets in saying that Lord Cromer gave it to Mr. Wallich, with the remark, "For the last ten years I have played tennis with Wallich every day of ■ life, and he has ■ asked ■ ■ favour, so ■ shall get this." A better appointment ■ never made.

possible, if not probable, duels, and through the manager of ■ Club applied to Prevost in Paris to send ■ out his most capable *maitre d'armes*. For some considerable period I kept this gentleman at my own expense for my own benefit, but he was afterwards taken on by the Turf Club as Professor. From the start I had of others, I was always in the highest class, and the only man I really feared was Captain Maxwell, who was very quick, and as strong as a young bull, which I certainly was not. Besides fencing in the Club, Maxwell and I sometimes went out in the early morning to Ghezireh, and, stripping to our shirt sleeves, had ■ practice at the *Jeu du Terrain*. Passers-by used to think it was ■ real duel, and blood ■ very often drawn in these mimic combats, which ■ most useful and instructive, as the general effect is quite different in the open air to what it is when facing an opponent on the plank in a saloon. Besides fencing, now and again the gloves would be donned at the Club; but there ■ ■ match for Maxwell at this game, though "Gerry" Portal, ■ he was always called, used often to have ■ spar with him. Surgeon Power was another good boxer, but he had neither the youth ■ strength of Maxwell.

I cannot refrain here from relating a scene which ■ shall never forget. The Italian fencing masters seeing their pupils deserting them for the Frenchman, decided to coalesce amongst themselves and open ■ grand ■ *Ecole d'Armes*, and advertised ■ ■ additional attraction ■ "Professor of Boxing from America." Our Club invited the Professor to come and give an exhibition of his prowess; but he declined, answering that he was bound by contract to the Italians. For the opening of the ■ establishment a general invitation was sent to any members of the Turf Club to be present. As we were riding back from polo, Maxwell suggested we might drop in, and ■ did so. We found about two hundred foreigners assembled, but ■ were the only two Englishmen present, though the manager of our own Club and the French *maitre d'armes* ■ ■ there. After watching ■ few bouts with the foils, ■ ■ inquired if there was to be any boxing, and were told

that the Professor ■ in attendance, but nobody wanted to take him on: ■ were at liberty to do so if ■ liked. On expressing a curiosity to see him, ■ were introduced to ■ rather short, pudgy man, in ■ frock coat and silk hat, who stated that he ■ very much ■ service. Maxwell thereupon said he would not mind having ■ spar to ■ the audience, and the champion withdrew to prepare himself. In ten minutes he appeared in ■ sleeveless jersey, feeling his biceps, which were truly enormous, and strolled round the ring "ruffling" it in the most approved fashion.

The gloves were brought, and Maxwell in his jack boots stepped out of his chair, peeled off his blazer, and ■ ready. After I had tied on his mittens, he held out his hand, apparently to the confusion of the Professor, who did not know what he meant, and Maxwell winked at this mark of ignorance of boxing etiquette. They had not been at it half a minute before a "postman" ■ administered, which so astonished and enraged the Italian that, flinging his ■ like ■ windmill, he rushed Maxwell by sheer weight, and irrespective of the punishment he ■ receiving all the time, clean through two or three rows of sitting spectators, who collapsed with their chairs in a pie, through ■ open door, and into an adjoining room, where he fell ■ the top of him. With some difficulty I hauled him off, and the pair faced each other for round number two. In the beginning all the onlookers had tittered and exchanged remarks of commiseration for the small Englishman who was going to be massacred, but now their champion ■ fairly painted, and the gloves ■ red than white. No time ■ cut to waste, and the big fellow commenced with ■ rush which it ■ impossible to stop. He must have scaled at least sixteen stone, if not more, to Maxwell's eleven-and-a-half at most. The Briton hit straight and hard ■ he ■ forced back, till he ■ pinned against the wall with his adversary's head in his chest. I feared biting, as I could see the Southern blood ■ fairly roused, and hastened to separate them, seizing the professional by the ■

"How do you feel, old man?" I rather anxiously inquired.

"All right! He can't ■ me in ■ week, and he's about done now. If he had caught ■ fair the first round, he might have hurt me, but all the steam is out of him now."

"You'd better finish this round," I concluded. "I don't like the look of things;" and ■ ■ matter of fact cries of "*Basta, basta!*" "*Vergogna!*" were being raised ■ all sides as the beaten man showed his gory face, ■ ■ mass of blood, whilst Maxwell's fists were soaking, and the floor red. He ■ ■ gritty enough, however, to insist on going on, though very groggy.

The third round did not last ■ minute. One ■ the mark brought his head forward, and ■ cross ■ the side of the neck stretched him out. Two bystanders picked him up by the head and two by the heels, and carried the fallen gladiator away. Maxwell quietly put on his coat, and we bowed and thanked them all for a very pleasant afternoon. A most respectful silence marked our exit through a broad lane, hastily made, and ■ ■ adjourned to our own Club to have a whisky and soda, which Maxwell, though he had never been touched, had well earned. I told this story to Bat Mullins, who had taught the hero of it, and his delight may be imagined. It transpired that the Professor was a circus Hercules or strong ■ ■ ; but he had ■ idea of boxing, and I doubt if he had ever had the gloves on in his life. It ■ ■ a sad lesson for the poor fellow, who ■ ■ laid up for ■ fortnight, and never offered to give lessons in the noble art again.

I might now dilate on pigeon-shooting, which I had ■ great share in promoting, and where ■ ■ had such good shots as poor Chamley Turner and Brophy, both of whom, curiously enough, met their end by drowning in the Nile, though both, especially Turner, who was ■ champion at it, ■ ■ strong swimmers. ■ will pass, however, to ■ subject which will doubtless appeal to a larger circle, namely, gambling.

As ■ ■ the first Egyptian campaign was over, just ■ ■ happened at Constantinople when the Russo-Turkish

War ended, Cairo swarmed with shady roulette and baccarat tables. The officers, non-co.'s, and even men, had accumulated pay, and most of it went to the keepers of these dens. I used sometimes to watch the play, and win ■ little money by staking ■ the opposite chance to that on which any particularly heavy coup ■ being played. I did this on the supposition that cheating was freely exercised, and my idea ■ proved up to the hilt ■ evening when the croupier cried, "*Apro!*" lifted the fateful lid, and behold! there was ■ wheel inside! The system there pursued ■ this. The box containing the wheel touched the wall, in which ■ a cupboard holding a confederate. There ■ pinholes through which he could see where the money lay, whether it ■ on red or black, odd or even, etc., and as soon as the ball stopped rolling, he deftly withdrew the whole concern and dropped the ivory into ■ convenient stall.

The scene which ensued beggars description. The lights were turned out, and ■ general scramble for the bank followed. Knives and chair legs were freely used, and everybody was very pleased to get out into the street. All these *tripôts* made small fortunes, but were gradually shut one after another by the police, and so-called private baccarat clubs took their place. These did even a ■ roaring trade than the roulette tables, and ■ usually conducted with tolerable fairness, the weight of money and experience always being sufficient to ensure winning. Some of them were comparatively select, and almost exclusively patronised by Britishers, and one or two favoured foreigners. So much money ■ lost, though, by ■ officers, that ■ general order forbade them to frequent these clubs, in spite of which, nevertheless, ■ few of the more reckless were generally to be found in those where they did not expect to be betrayed. There was ■ of these clubs especially favoured by our countrymen, and in consequence it incurred the jealousy and hatred of its rivals, who wished to have their share in the pluming of fat pigeons. Its proprietor, ■ Frenchman, was often warned against the

Greek ruffians who considered themselves wronged by the superior popularity of his place, and he hired an Albanian to keep guard below and to allow ■■■■ but habitués to enter. One night I ■■■■ playing there, when several pistol-shots rang out below, and directly afterwards the door-keeper staggered up and fell over the threshold. Rushing downstairs, we found another ■■■■ dead at the foot of the steps, a second lying sorely wounded in the road, and ■■■■ third slightly wounded in the clutch of the police. It appeared that these three had presented themselves and said they wanted to ■■■■ the manager. The Albanian had refused to permit them to pass, when they made a simultaneous attack on him with knives and pistols. He received ■■■■ bullet in the chest and ■■■■ stab between the ribs, and died in ■■■■ few minutes. The result of his fire was as above stated. I might give a good many instances within my personal knowledge of very similar outrages, but it would ■■■■ ■■■■ good purpose. The result of them all ■■■■ that baccarat began to be played at the Turf Club, ■■■■ it was already in vogue ■■■■ the Khedivial. I do not intend to mention any names in connection with the high play which used to go on, since my ■■■■ case, as ■■■■ of the moderate players, will amply suffice to illustrate it. On the following page is ■■■■ faithful extract from my baccarat book for an ordinary month. There were other times at which I both won and lost more largely, but this may be taken ■■■■ ■■■■ fair sample.

Except ■■■■ few, almost professionals, most of us played not from any great passion for the game, but for want of something better to do, and for good company. Baccarat is a game which is perhaps not ■■■■ simple as many people imagine, but it requires no great mental strain, and when once a good party sat down we seldom separated till the small hours were growing into big ones. There were ■■■■ certain number of very regular attendants, amongst whom I ■■■■ one, who for four ■■■■ five years missed very few nights, and yet I can affirm with absolute truth that I cared, and care, very little for play, unless it be ■■■■ good game of whist, vint, or mild poker.

10 TWENTY YEARS ■ THE NEAR EAST

1885									LOST
August	1st	-	-	-	-	-	-	£250	...
"	2nd	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	£120
"	3rd	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	...
"	4th	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	110
"	5th	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	...
"	6th	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	...
"	7th	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	...
"	8th	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	100
"	9th	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	...
"	10th	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	...
"	11th	-	-	-	-	-	-	160	...
"	12th	-	-	-	-	-	-	90	...
"	13th	-	-	-	-	-	-	75	...
"	14th	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	...
"	15th	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	...
"	16th, 17th	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	...
"	18th	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	85
"	19th, 20th	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	...
"	21st	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	...
"	22nd	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	60
"	23rd	-	-	-	-	-	-	62	...
"	24th	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	...
"	25th	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	55
"	26th	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	...
"	27th	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	■
"	28th	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	...
"	29th	-	-	-	-	-	-	...	19
"	30th	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	...
"	31st	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	...
								£1242	£569
								569	
								+ £673	

For some time, indeed almost as long ■ I stuck to punting, I ■ ■ fairly steady winner, but in the end ■ changed to banking, and was despoiled in a few months of all I had won and a "bit" ■ besides. One of the reasons of this was that most of the old amateur players had by that time given it up, and I had only the professionals against me.

When I had no ■ cash to lose, I also threw up the sponge, and have very seldom played since; but if ■ parted with my money, I learnt ■ secret which I ■ now going to divulge for the first time. Probably most old

gamblers will smile pityingly when I say that in the next few pages I shall set forth ■ method by which anybody with ordinary patience ■■ be ■■■■ of winning ■ anything in this world is sure. It ■■ given to ■■ by one of those who had ■■ most of my money, and ■ the few occasions on which I have tried it, it has always succeeded. I consider myself rather an old hand, and personally I am completely convinced of the invincibility of this system, which is one I have never seen in print yet, although part of it will be familiar to every lover of the green cloth.

Without further preamble, therefore, here is the goose with golden eggs.

I start on the well-known theory, or fact, that all equal chances equalise themselves in the long-run, whether it be the hand of the baccarat banker against that of the punter, the red against the black, the odd against the even, or the head against the tail.

The object of the perfect punter should be to profit by as many of the appearances of his chance ■ he can, and to lose as few ■ possible coups on the adverse one. In the ■■■■ of, say, any ■■■■ coups, it is an established fact beyond dispute that there will be about an equality between any two equal chances. Supposing ■■ take red and black, for convenience sake. We ■■ backing black. Out of the 500 reds which are against ■■ there are sure to be ■ number of "series" of three, four, ■ more. I think nobody will object to admitting this. Let ■ say that half of the total, namely, 250, is made up of 50 "series" of four or more. *If we play only two losing coups and then cease staking until ■■ colour turns up, when we begin again, ■■ can only lose 100 out of the 250 against us. Vice versé,* out of 250 blacks turning up in the same manner, we shall have always omitted to stake ■■ the first one coming after ■ red, consequently ■■ shall miss 50 winning blacks, but we shall score on ■■

The basis of the system, then, is ■■■■ to stake more than twice losing, and thereby you avoid the long ■■ against you, which break so many wretched punters, who

drop in a couple of long losing "series," which they persist in betting against, all that they may have won in twenty smaller winning ones. It then remains to arrange a method of staking whereby you may recoup faster than you pay away, though even with ■ fixed stake you would almost invariably win, as above shown. The most convenient one is the familiar 1, 2, 3.

These figures must be set down, one over the other, thus—

■

The stake will always be the ■■■ of the top and bottom ones. The first *mise* will therefore be $1 + 3 = 4$. If you win, you strike out the two figures which have formed your stake, thus—

1
2
3

Only ■ then remains, and you stake it. If you lose, you write it down underneath, thus—

1
2
3
2

Your next stake will be $2 + 2 = 4$. If you win, you strike them both out, and your column being dead, you begin afresh, with ■ gain of 6 on an intermixture of three coups. Supposing, however, that you lose again. Your figures then will be—

1
2

4

and you leave off staking, having lost two consecutive turns. We will say your black next turns up when you have nothing ■■■. As ■■■ as it does, you recommence staking. For argument's sake, we will imagine that after your two losing coups red turned up three times, during which you looked ■■■ with indifference. Then your black

also has a run of five. What happens? You have not staked on the first one, but after the second one has won this will be the state of your calculation—

1
2
3
2
1

The third turn-up takes out the last 2, and the fourth and fifth polish off a fresh column, leaving you 12 stakes to the good ■ equal runs. Every time your figures ■■ all crossed out you will find you have won six stakes, to whatever length it may be drawn out. It will be seen at ■ glance that by this calculation you put down one figure each time and strike out two; in other words, every winning coup is equivalent to what you have lost, plus either one of the original three numbers, or if, in the ■■■ of play, ■ may happen, they have all been crossed out, before the column is destroyed, plus another losing coup. It requires no mathematical genius to see that there is one, and only one, possible combination which can defeat this system. That is, that one black should continuously turn up by itself between two or more reds. You would never be "on" it when it appeared, and would always lose on the two blacks. This eventuality, however, is scarcely worth taking into account. An examination of the records of Monte Carlo will, I think, fail to discover any instance of solitary blacks or reds sandwiched between two and more of the opposite colour more than eight times, and that perhaps ■■ or twice in a year.

The following run is about as unfavourable as can be imagined, and will necessitate recourse to ■ modification of the system in order to prevent too high stakes:—

1 x
2 x
3 (o)
4 ■
5 x
6 (o)
7 o

8	o
9	x
10	x
■	(o)
12	o
13	x
14	x
15	(o)
16	■
17	x
18	■
19	(o)
20	o
21	x
■	o
23	x

In this there are 12 reds (x) and 11 blacks (o), but ■ have only staked and won on six of the blacks, lost on all twelve reds. At the twenty-third coup we have to write down 29, and our column stands thus—

1
2
3
4
5
6

11
12
16
17
22
25
29

We now have too high a figure at the top. It will take ■ longer to end the column, perhaps, but it is safer to split the twelve into, say, 1, 1, 2, 2, 2, 4, and reconstitute our column thus—

1
1
2
2
2
4
17
29

Patience will be necessary, but for those with small capital it is always advisable to reduce the top figure as ■■■ as it reaches 10. In the foregoing example, the backer of black would at the twenty-fourth coup be losing the sum of all the figures left in the column, less 6, since, when they are all obliterated, he will be plus 6, but two blacks would take him out, or three or four intermittences. In many cases it would pay very well for two players to each back one chance, though in a succession of small series like the foregoing it would not. As above, the backer of red would lose altogether about 32, and the backer of black 48 or 50; but it must be repeated that it is purposely given ■ a singularly hard run.

In a ■■■ like the following, for example, both would win—

1	x	Red.
2	o	Black.
3	x	
4	o	
5	x	
6	o	
7	o	
8	o	
9	o	
10	x	
11	x	
12	x	
13	x	
14	o	
15	o	
16	x	
17	x	
18	x	
19	x	
20	x	

Here the backer of black wins 12, minus 2, left out of the 8, which the ■■■ of his column amounts to, namely, 10 nett. Black wins 24. Between them ■ twenty coups they win 34 without either ■■■ having had to stake ■■■ than 7. If ■■■ plays in unities of 5 francs, a ■■■ of ■■■ £50 should suffice to see the end of almost any small batches of series. My own experience is that a column is

usually struck out on an average about four times in an hour ; or at ■ franc unities, ■ gain of nearly £5 may with tolerable confidence be expected at roulette, and almost with certainty at baccarat, where, from some unexplainable reason, this system works quicker, although I believe it to be quite invincible even at the former game, since it has the advantage of never approaching the maximum and of enabling one to treat the ■■■■ with indifference as ■■■■ adverse chances. At anyrate, such as it is, I make ■ present of my system to the public, and hope that any who may care to give it a trial will find it answer as well as I have invariably done whenever I have put it into practice.

CHAPTER VII

ON the 1st of January 1889 I said good-bye to Egypt, and started for Roumania *via* Constantinople, which I reached on the 11th, having spent a week at Athens *en route*. Next day I had lunch with Sir W. White at the Embassy, and at two in the afternoon embarked for Varna, where I landed on the 13th in a tremendous snowstorm. This was rather an abrupt change of climate, for the day before I left Cairo we had picnicked at the Pyramids in our shirt sleeves at midnight. There were no trains running, and we had to put up in some discomfort at the hotel. Next morning, instead of going at 8.30, the mail could not leave till 11, and then we had to walk from the hotel to the station over a road like glass, so slippery that no carriages could run. Bucharest was naturally all under snow, and I had my first sledge-ride into the town on arrival. Altogether, I stayed less than two months in my new post—the “little Paris of the East,” as it is often called. Most of the days were spent in skating, sledging, and paying calls, and the evenings at public and private balls, for it was carnival-time. Bucharest is one of the few places left where a carnival masked ball is often patronised by respectable people, and where some fun is to be had out of it, in contradistinction to the rowdy and vulgar mob of shop-boys and theatre-girls which represents the company at most of these melancholy travesties of frolic elsewhere.

Believing that I was likely to stay for at least a year or two, I arranged with Mr. Boxshall, the American, and Mr. Brown, the British, Vice-Consul to go shares in a little house, and we spent a good deal of money in furnishing it. The abode of the three B.'s soon acquired a great reputation, and many were the merry days and

nights it saw. Sir Frank Lascelles ■ then Minister, and his two ■ being ■ there for the winter, they, together with half a dozen other of the younger members of the Diplomatic body, ■ daily visitors. Another moving spirit ■ Reuter's representative, a somewhat mad Irishman named Mooney, and though Bucharest is not much in need of the colour, ■ used sometimes to paint it very red. All this ■ put an end to in my ■ very suddenly by my being utilised one day to take the bags, as Queen's Messenger, to Sir A. Nicolson at Pesth. On reaching the station, a telegram ■ handed to me, kindly forwarded by Sir F. Lascelles, which had come just after I had started. It ■ laconic, containing only three words: "Go to Belgrade.—Mudford." Supposing that there were reasons for this which it was not expedient to give, I asked Sir A. Nicolson, my old Chief when I ■ a Student Interpreter at Ortakeui, if he could arrange for the return bags, and off I went to Belgrade, with a small handbag for all luggage, and a few pounds in my pocket.

In the Servian capital everything was in a state of the wildest excitement, for Milan had just abdicated, and I had my work cut out for me. Owing to the censorship, all correspondents had to send, or more safely to take, their messages across the Save to Semlin. There was a comfortable hotel there, and generally ■ little theatre-going, far superior to the wretched entertainments to be had in Belgrade, and once over there we, as often ■ not, spent the night on Austrian soil. Before entering into any ■ personal reminiscences, I may perhaps be allowed to introduce the reader to Belgrade and the Serbs.¹

Belgrade, ■ Beograd, the White Fortress, stands on one of the most magnificent natural sites man could choose or conceive. From its lofty cliff it looks down on the waters of the Save, rolling in from the West, and the scarcely wider Danube curving Eastward towards the forests of Basias, whilst behind it the fertile plains of Hungary stretch away into ■ misty distance, and end by

¹ Most of this description appeared in almost, when not exactly, the same words ■ the ■ of the *Saturday Review*.

mingling indistinctly with the northern horizon. Like most Turkish fortresses, Belgrade is built upon a hill, sloping towards the two rivers, and on either slope the houses creep from the edges of the stream, straggling up to the summit crowned with the old castle and the new gardens of Kalimeidan, planted along the moat and upper bastions of the citadel, which is now a mere relic of the past, and in no condition to defend the peaceful dwellers beneath its massive shade. Like a toothless old watchdog, it still keeps mimic ward ; but it has nothing warlike except its appearance. Where now, ■ a sunny afternoon, the populace lies lazily basking ■ the ground, ■ strolling with its children, sweethearts, and wives, enjoying the glorious panorama of nature ■ couple of thousand feet below and twenty miles round in every direction, it is difficult to picture to oneself the Turkish atrocities, the shouts of the murderers, the shrieks of the murdered, and the impalement of gory and headless trunks, as having had for their stage and theatre these very grassy plots and gravel walks. Yet it ■ in Kalimeidan Gardens that ■ of the most fearful horrors of modern war ■ perpetrated, resulting finally in the intervention of Europe and the hurling back of the Ottoman tyranny beyond the Balkans.¹

Since its emancipation, Servia has changed considerably, and Belgrade ■ the capital has made the largest strides towards claiming its place amongst the civilised centres of Europe. All the ancient Turkish Quarter has been swept away, and is now chiefly occupied by ■ colony of Spanish Jews. A few half-ruined fountains with Arabic inscriptions, and ■ single mosque, fast falling to pieces in uncared-for decay, are all that remain of the Moslem

¹ Very few witnesses remained of these barbarities. Amongst them ■ an Italian named Carlo Perolo, who had been ■ eye-witness of all the events which culminated in the bombardment of Belgrade in 1862. When the Commission of Inquiry arrived, the Turkish Delegate offered Perolo £10,000 and ■ passport for any European capital, if he would simply leave Belgrade that afternoon, at the same time saying that his life would be in danger if ■ stayed. Perolo, however, refused to move, and gave in his testimony. He never received even thanks from Prince Michael.

sway. In close proximity to this last relic of the religion of the late masters of the city stands the National Theatre, built in the Modern Italian style, and over against it ■ model of Prince Michael on horseback. The Royal Palace is also ■ handsome block, though lacking in dignity. Lately an electric tramway has been run from the station up Michael Street, but having gone ■ far we have nearly reached the limit of all that can be said for the beauty and luxury of Belgrade. Beyond what nature has done for it, and what King Milan did for himself, there is not much to attract. The private houses ■■ comfortable, but no endeavour seems to be made after anything beyond ■■ creature wants, even by the most wealthy. Public amusement is even more meagre than such is provided for each other by the few most recklessly gay spirits in private life. Social entertainment of any kind is generally regarded as superfluous, and except an occasional dinner-party or two, nothing of the kind is attempted outside Court circles. When the theatre is open, it affords a certain resource for those who can appreciate Servian drama, but otherwise the ■■ of enjoyment within reach consists, or consisted in my day, in listening to a German band playing in an atmosphere of the foulest description, reeking with the fumes of tobacco, beer, and unwashed Servians, and in absorbing successive glasses of deleterious liquors. Long practice makes perfect in both these accomplishments, but a stranger will find it hard to breathe for more than ten minutes in ■ Belgrade café. *Per contra*, ■ famous member of the police force is pointed out with pride who spends his whole evenings in these establishments, presumably in the exercise of his functions, and who lately imbibed seventy-eight *bocks* of beer between eight o'clock and midnight.

But if the town is not attractive, the surrounding country is perfection, either for riding, driving, ■ walking. Long avenues of poplar, beech, acacia, and elm lead out north, south, east, and west, the big roads narrowing and broadening, ■ the houses ■■ left behind, into country lanes between woods, fields, and hedgerows, which remind

one involuntarily of an English landscape. Down by the Danube and the Save broad marshes, covered with sodden grass and rushes and fringed with osier, tempt the sports-
 ■ in search of snipe and duck, whilst the birch coppices strewn with autumn leaves, through which, here and there, trickle snow-born streams, look ■ destined home for the woodcock.

In analysing the national character you have two distinct classes to deal with—the governmental and commercial, which wears coats, trousers, and boots—but not always socks; and the peasant, which affects jackets, petticoats, and sandals. The judgment of the world, based ■ the observations of travellers and foreign residents, must naturally be formed rather from the first class, with which they ■ into contact, than from the second, which they only know vaguely from statistics and by sight. Many of the ■ pugnacious Serbs when cornered in argument by irrefragable proof of the corruption and backwardness of their Government, will declare that it is not fair to judge the people by the townsfolk and the bureaucracy. Unfortunately, these ■ the specimens given to the critic for dissection, and if a nation is not to be judged by its institutions and its leading men, or by its civil and social progress in its capital and principal towns, but merely by visionary ideas of its own capabilities and merits as expressed by those who signally fail to prove their theories in themselves, all discussion becomes impossible.

As regards the peasants, there is very little difference between them and their like all over the East. The agriculturist is generally (not always in Servia) sober, honest, hard-working, and hospitable, whether he be born a Turk, an Arab, a Roumanian, a Bulgarian, or a Serb. Men and women alike wear huge sandals with ■ wilderness of straps bound about the leg up to the knee, and the ladies display multicoloured aprons worked by themselves, brief skirts, and short, thick-quilted jackets, with ■ gaudy kerchief binding the hair. The aforesaid aprons ■ among the few pretty objects a traveller ■ take away with him as

examples of native industry. They are in a sort of bastard Turkish style, and though rough in material and crude in colour, are effective as a chair, or small table, covers. The best product of the country is the Pirot carpet, worth about ten shillings a square metre. The designs are extremely pretty, and the rugs, without being so heavy as the Persian, or so ragged and scant in the web and woof as Caramanian, wear for ever. The manufacture of these is almost entirely confined to Pirot, near the Bulgarian frontier, from which place they take their commercial name. The real industrial wealth of Serbia lies in its pigs. Out of a population of about ten millions, seven millions walk on four legs, with an independent air, a sort of "pig and a brother" assumption of co-equal rights and privileges. The Servian pig is certainly a remarkable animal, and no other worldly pig is so self-assertive, so strong, and so hairy as he. I have seen one of them, whilst driving along, seated by the side of his master, insist on alighting where he pleased, which happened to be over the splash-board. No persuasion or argument could induce him to alter his mind, and it was not until he had tripped up the pony and upset the cart that he gave his grunt of satisfaction.¹ The mature hog's coat is of a deep red brown and is curly as a retriever's, turning to long grey bristles down his back as he advances in years. His presence is everywhere visible or audible. He crops out on every hillside and from every thicket and copse, and lines the banks of the Danube in his hundreds, whilst the train that carries you away from Belgrade will be loaded with trucks laden with squealing porkers which tax the imagination to conceive by what ingenuity the brutes are

¹ Talking of peasants, ponies, and carts, I was once driving behind a jibbing beast, who finally in a narrow lane firmly declined to budge. The driver, after exhausting every other method and breaking a stout whip-handle over its ribs, got down, unharnessed the traces, extracting at the same time the slugs from a young blunderbuss he carried. He then delicately elevated the tail of the recalcitrant animal, and training his pistol carefully, pulled the trigger. We had no difficulty afterwards in catching the pony, but there was no more jibbing; indeed, he would hardly let himself be taken out of the shafts at the end of the day.

induced to enter and be penned. When remember that the present King Alexander's father was a swineherd at Takovo, must further allow the pig his niche in Servian history to add to his commercial importance and artistic value.

Perhaps one of the reasons of Servia's unhappiness is that she has too great a past to live up to, and too little a present to give her a chance of doing so. Her history is her curse. Instead of grappling with the hard, earnest problems of to-day, she lives in an atmosphere of dreams, wherein, without efforts of her own, the old glories of Czar Dushan's kingdom are to be revived. The Serb believes, beyond all power of contrary conviction, that because Servia was once a formidable empire and possessed legendary heroes of the Homeric type, she has a perfect claim on the sympathies of all Europe in her natural wish to regain her ancient prestige at the expense of other nations who are steadily and doggedly working out their own salvation. Sitting in his pothouse, and trolling forth lugubrious ditties of the great deeds of Marko Kralievitch and Milosh, the Serb waits for destiny's last word. He has not yet realised that the nineteenth century is not the sixteenth, and the twentieth will resemble it still less. With the fatal birthright, like the Greek, of an epic story, the Serb also inherits a splendid confidence in his own personal perfections. His vanity would be comic if it were not deplorable. His imperviousness to all kindly criticism is childish, and it is this trait which most utterly destroys all prospects for his improvement. It is not the blindness of the man who will not see, for he positively does not, and cannot, perceive his own shortcomings. More than this, he rejoices in them with a joy which would be interesting in a schoolboy or a savage, but which is to the last degree saddening in a man with professed aspirations. The character of a nation is best shadowed forth in its recreations and habits of daily life. When not in actual pursuit of his work or duties, the life of the Serb is not passed at home or in outdoor amusements, but in his favourite tavern or café. If you enter one of these estab-

lishments and call for refreshment, you will find yourself ■ ■ table covered with ■ cloth once white, but not destined to recover that hue until all traces of the original colour have disappeared. A remonstrance would cause the most intense surprise ; for at the next table, spread in an equally repugnant manner, ■ couple of Ministers are quite contentedly devouring their meal, and playfully practising the sword-swallowing trick with their knives and green peas. What is good enough for ■ Servian Minister should be good enough for a ridiculous foreigner. A little farther off, ■ fifteenth-class German singing-girl is drinking beer with an officer in uniform, preparatory to mounting the platform, and close beside them are half a dozen private soldiers. This is the discipline of the Servian Army. If you were to remark that, not only in England, but in ■ foreign country and on campaign,—in Egypt, for example, —all privates and non-commissioned officers would salute and retire on the entry of ■ junior subaltern wearing his sword, the Serb would ■ ■ see any reason for such decency and respect. In fact, he rather prefers a dirty tablecloth and the proximity of his inferiors in various stages of moral and physical uncleanness.

Notwithstanding their backwardness, the Servians live on in a bliss of supreme contempt for everything which is outside and beyond them. Instead of the unknown being ■ theme for admiration or ambition, it is rather one for scorn. They are perfectly satisfied with their rotten roads, their badly-lighted and malodorous streets, their defective police and municipal regulations, their tumble-down, dreary, carpetless Ministries, their censor-ridden press, and their generally slovenly conditions of existence. The officials will tell you that they have ■ pavements, no gas, and ■ water, because they have no money. The reason that they have ■ money is that they have no credit, and the ■ ■ they have no credit is that they show no ministerial or constitutional stability or honesty. Starting on the assumption that all foreigners come to Servia to plunder and steal, the Serb puts every obstacle in their way. When ordinary ■ ■ fail, he robs them himself ■ soon as their enter-

prise shows signs of being lucrative. Having very nearly succeeded at length, by repeated acts of chicanery and violence, in stopping all influx of foreign capital, the Serbs ■■■ beginning to stew in their own juice, and yet they complain that they can obtain no sympathy from Europe. Offering no inducements to strangers, treating those from whom they might learn with stupid contumely, and pluming themselves meanwhile ■■ their self-reliance, the Serbs, like the Scriptural swine, are rushing headlong down a steep place into the sea of moral and civil corruption. If a foreigner points out ■■ abuse to ■ Minister, he is ■■■ to be met with the rejoinder, "You appear to think, sir, that because you ■■■ a Frenchman, or an Englishman, you ■■ to be treated differently from the rest of the world." He does not perceive that the abuse is an abuse *per se*, and that any Serb might, and ought, to protest against ■ just as vigorously and pertinently. But the fact is that the Serb is content to endure what is intolerable to fully civilised beings. It is significant that whereas in other countries it is usually sufficient to bring offences to the notice of the Minister, in Servia you may spare yourself the trouble of doing so, and the annoyance of discovering that the highest officials are ■■ more advanced in their views, or broader in their ideas, than the humblest and most ignorant of their subordinates.

It is true that there ■■ bright exceptions to prove the rule, and with diligent search ■■■ might possibly find ten righteous men to save the country. But they are distinctly exceptions. The majority, especially those who are loudest in proclaiming their patriotism, will not stir a finger in any direction not dictated by self-interest, as wrongly understood by them according to their own dim, flickering lights. Hedged round with an impenetrable barrier of self-satisfaction, they will neither listen ■■■ learn; and if ever there was a pride which promised a fall, it is the latter-day pride of the Serbs.

The hotels being far from comfortable, I soon took up quarters at the only respectable pension ■ Belgrade, kept by a M. Baimel, and patronised by several of the young

bachelor diplomats, in the Balkanskaya Ulitza, one of the principal streets of the town. Amongst my fellow-lodgers ■■■ M. de Buisseret, the Belgian Secretary, and one night ■■■ were returning from ■ whist party on foot. As ■■■ half-way home, ■■■ heard ■■■ shouting behind us, and ■■■ ■■■ rushing headlong down the hill. In another instant two or three shots rang out, and several bullets whistled past ■■■ ■■■ and struck the wall and paving-stones. We had too good a knowledge of the Serbs to do anything but take to our heels and seek refuge as fast ■■■ we could in our own house. My room looked out on the street, and, opening the shutters, we watched subsequent proceedings, which ■■■ curious. The pursuing party halted opposite, and after satisfying themselves that the fugitive was not with us, concluded he must have hidden himself in the dwelling over against ours. There ■■■ a big door, and after hammering at it, an old lady appeared at the window with ■ candle. One of the police then very carefully opened the gate and thrust in his rifle, whilst another with equal caution held the light. A report was followed by a groan, and in a few seconds a corpse was dragged out and thrown into the middle of the road, with an accompaniment of abusive epithets. There it was left until next morning, when the newspapers contained glowing accounts of the efficiency and desperate valour of the guardians of the peace, who had chased ■ notorious brigand, armed with ■ pistol and hatchet, and had only succeeded in shooting him down after ■ terrific struggle in which two of them had been wounded. On investigation, it was proved that the murdered man—for a more cold-blooded murder ■■■ ■■■ perpetrated—was ■ harmless Austrian pedlar, who had crept into the yard and huddled up in ■ ■■■ to sleep. Both M. de Buisseret and myself remonstrated with the authorities, and gave ■■■ version as eye-witnesses to the whole Diplomatic Corps, who nevertheless failed to obtain the slightest satisfaction, or even ■ admission of the truth.

Yet another instance of Servian savagery. ■ ■■■

on ■ visit to ■ Vice-Consul at Nisch, Mr. Macdonald, who had just married and brought out his wife. One morning we sallied forth in ■ victoria to look for quail, and drove out about twelve miles. Just before lunch-time Macdonald had the misfortune to hit an old peasant woman with one or two shot in the wrist as she ■ squatting down out of sight amongst the corn. A great outcry was made, though she was hardly hurt at all, and Mrs. Macdonald herself bathed and bound up the wound temporarily, with a promise to bear the cost of medical treatment. About two hours later we ■ astonished to find ourselves surrounded by ■ angry crowd, who declared that they would not let ■ go. Macdonald declared that he had no wish to run away, that he was the British Vice-Consul, and that he demanded to talk with the Kmet or Mayor. "Oh yes!" ■ the reply, "you shall talk with him; he is coming directly;" and in fact he soon arrived, followed by a *posse*, one of whom carried several pieces of rope. In a twinkling they seized Macdonald, took away his gun and tied his arms behind him, striking him repeatedly ■ while. It was with some difficulty that I restrained myself from firing upon them; but Macdonald himself entreated me to keep quiet, especially ■ they had worked themselves up to a foaming state of rage, and ■ least ■ score of them had rifles. The feelings of poor Mrs. Macdonald at this her first experience of the people amongst whom she had ■ to live may be imagined. The angry crowd had assembled round our midday camp, where the horses were grazing away from the carriage. After a whispered consultation, Macdonald entreated me to make a rush for Nisch and try and get help. I was very loth to leave him and his wife in the clutches of the mob, and at first absolutely refused to do so. He ■ ■ strong on the point, though, that I decided to make the attempt, and telling Mrs. Macdonald that if I got safe through I would be back before long, I made towards the best-looking of the two sorry jades which had brought ■ out. The peasants had from the first paid very little attention to

me, concentrating all their wrath upon the offender, and I managed to unhobble the horse unnoticed. In another instant I had vaulted on his back, and giving him some sounding kicks in the ribs, started off. Before I had gone twenty yards, I heard a yell of rage, and half a dozen of the natives were after me. I had neither saddle, bridle, nor whip; but I nevertheless went faster than they, and soon put a quarter of a mile between us. I had never been in this part of the country before, and only a very short while in Servia, not knowing ten words then of the language. Guessing they would try and cut me off if I rode in the straight direction for where I supposed the town lay, I took an exactly opposite line for nearly an hour. The result proved I was right, for they drew up a long cordon between the spot where they were and Nisch, which I only evaded by luck and by unconsciously taking a very wide détour. Anybody who has ever ridden a miserable razor-backed nag without appurtenances has some form of idea of the delightful experience I went through. To cut a long story short, I reached Nisch about seven o'clock, and went straight to the Governor. He was, of course, out. I then repaired to the Prefect. Also out. Knowing the love of the Serb for the café, I inquired which was his favourite resort, and there, of course, I found him at last, and not without a good deal of argument I persuaded him to send out with a few mounted police, and we started to the rescue. At the village we heard that the whole party had gone up "into the mountain." In fact, they intended to hold the prisoners to ransom in true and orthodox brigand style. Pressing on, I had to ford two rivers, across which Mrs. Macdonald had been carried, but through which my unfortunate representative had had to wade, and finally I caught them up and released them. It is unnecessary to recount subsequent proceedings, beyond saying that the only satisfaction for this outrage was an apology, and I believe the imposition nominally of a small fine, which was exacted. It will now be understood that in giving a general character for

hospitality and good behaviour to Balkan peasants ■ few pages back I made a reservation in the case of the Serb.

It ■ in Serbia that I underwent the novel experience of being officially expelled. The facts merit historical honours. It was on the occasion of Queen Natalie's first visit to Belgrade since the divorce. The Government looked on her advent with great misgivings, and declared she should ■ no account be allowed ■ to her son, guarding the Palace with a battalion of infantry. The young King, who was only a boy and dearly loved his mother, resented these measures very deeply; and when the Queen went up the street he attempted to leave his room, but Dr. Dokitch his tutor simply locked the door, behind which a very stormy scene took place. Reporting proceedings, I telegraphed to the *Standard*: "I have good reason to know that King Alexander was only restrained from meeting his mother by main force. The Regents and his tutor had literally to forbid him to leave the Palace, and I am informed that the scene behind the locked doors of the Konak at the time of Queen Natalie's triumphal progress ■ of a most scandalous nature." This telegram appeared on the 1st October, and no notice whatever was taken of it at the time, nor any observations made to me. About ■ fortnight later, though, at four ■ afternoon, several police called at my rooms and exhibited ■ order for me to leave Servian territory before sunset. I protested most energetically, and declared that I would not go until I had referred to my Minister; but they would hear of no delay, and said that I had better pack anything I needed, for that at sunset they would put me on board a steamer. I sent ■ message round to Mr. St. John, but it did not reach him; and so, with the scantiest ceremony, I was escorted down to the river and to the other side in charge of ■ police officer. Next day I was unofficially informed that I might return if I liked, but that ■ German correspondent who had been exiled together with me would not be again allowed in Serbia. It then turned out that the Government had reasons for wishing to get rid of

this other gentleman, but in order to cover the real object of the ■■■■■ they had pretexted telegrams disagreeable and offensive to the King, and coupled ■■■ with the real man they wanted to send out of the country. This did not, however, suit me at all. The expulsion had been carried out illegally and brutally, without notice to my Minister and based ■■■ false pretences, whilst being radically a contravention of the article in the Constitution declaring that the "Press is free." I therefore addressed a very strong letter to M. Sava Gruitch, the President of the Council, pointing out that the whole business was an intrigue of the official in charge of the Press Bureau, whose irregular conduct in himself acting ■■■ correspondent for several foreign newspapers I had exposed, and who had taken this means of revenging himself. I also stated unofficially that it was not sufficient privately to give me notice of permission to return, but that ■■■ I had been publicly expelled I insisted ■■■ being publicly brought back with an apology. The case was also taken up in the Skuptschina, and ■■■ made the grounds of an attack on the Government; and finally, after ■■■ good deal of undignified wrangling, one of the superior officers of police was sent over to Semlin with a steam launch to tender an apology and to beg me to return under his escort, thus closing the incident.

Up to now it may be noticed that ■■■ have very little that is pleasant to say about Servia and the Serbs; but though perhaps it is one of the countries I have lived in which holds the fewest agreeable memories, I passed a very interesting year there, and met many remarkable men and women. Curiously enough, one of my best friends amongst the foreign diplomats was M. Persiany, the Russian Minister. I hope his colleagues will forgive ■■■ for saying that at the time of my residence he entirely held the keys of the situation, and did very much as he pleased. He has since been shelved, but he certainly held high the ■■■ and prestige of Russia whilst at Belgrade. Whenever I wished for information I could not easily obtain elsewhere ■■■ knew it could be found at M. Persiany's

—If he chose to give it. He was also full of original ideas, and ■ regular type of the Muscovite Minister. My entrance ■■ always greeted with, "Here comes my enemy. Sit down and have ■ glass of sherry," and then the talk began. In my humble opinion it was M. Perslany who steered the Servian ship through the storms which succeeded each other so rapidly and threateningly after King Milan's abdication, and it was only after his removal that Russian influence began to fall back before Austrian. I regret that I am unable to reproduce many of the anecdotes and secrets told me by one and another at Belgrade, but ■ respect for confidences is the stock-in-trade of a newspaper correspondent, and if he betrays it he will soon find his occupation gone. I think, however, I may be allowed to take the following from my notes of a conversation with King Milan, who, with all the faults that the world casts in his teeth, is a monarch of great capabilities and strength of character. He is certainly to-day the only man whom all parties in Servia fear, as they treat most of those who happen to be in authority over them at one period ■ another with familiar contempt.

The conversation in question took place in July 1889, when His Majesty had returned to his old capital as father of the King. He ■■ living in the Palace, and the talk turned upon Russia and Bulgaria. He then gave me the following amusing and instructive story:—"To illustrate Russian methods. In 1875 there was great excitement here about the Bosnian insurrection, and when I arrived by steamer I was met at the wharf by such a crowd and with such enthusiasm as I have never since seen—one and all shouting themselves hoarse for 'War!' The Ministry had not decided to make its declaration, but seemed inclined that way, and were arming volunteers everywhere, especially ■ the Montenegrin frontier. I ■■ that any day these bands, ostensibly organised for defence, might suddenly ■■ the boundary and drag ■ head and shoulders into ■ disastrous war. So I determined to take vigorous measures. The Skuptschina ■■ then

sitting in the High School. I drove down with an aide-de-camp, and when I arrived the Ministers all came out to ask me what I wanted. I replied that in consonance with ancient usage in Servia, I, Prince, wished to speak directly and personally with the representatives of the nation. They replied that such a thing was quite unconstitutional, and that if I had anything to say it must be through them. I retorted that the moment was so critical that I had resolved to act, and that whether it was constitutional or not I would not be prevented. Whereupon they declared that if I entered the building they would once resign. Upon this I despatched my aide-de-camp to the Prefecture, and the Prefect arrived, I scrawled on a piece of paper, 'The Ministry has offered its resignation, which I have accepted. Henceforward you will pay no attention to any orders you may receive from those who held portfolios. You will come to the Palace daily and receive your instructions straight from me, and the current business will be carried on by the senior clerks. In the Ministers attempt to exercise their functions you will at once arrest them all'—and gave it to him. I then turned to my Ministers and informed them they were such no longer, and went into the Chamber. There I made a speech, saying that all the *criailleries* and bombast which pervaded Servia in the highest degree discreditable: that if they meant they must at once vote supplementary army estimates, extraordinary taxes, etc., but that they must decide then and there, in my presence. I would put the question, 'Did Servia want war or not?' and each deputy simply to say 'Yes' or 'No'—nothing more. There about eighty present, and sixty against and twenty for war. On the result being announced, I thanked them, and added that my personal opinion was the same as that which they had just expressed. This being the case, all volunteer bands must forthwith be disarmed, and there must be more blatant vapouring about. The Ministry had resigned, and so on, and so on.

"That evening I drove out as usual to Topshiderch, and ■ the road I ■ the Russian Minister, M. Kaltzoff, gesticulating to me to stop. ■ asked him what ■ the matter, and he replied, 'I have a communication to make to you. Perhaps you may be able to understand it; ■ can't,' and he handed me ■ despatch, which I still preserve as ■ curiosity and will show you ■ day. On one side was written—

"Vous êtes chargé par le Gouvernement Impérial de remercier le Prince Milan pour l'acte d'énergie qu'il vient de faire. Par ■ attitude vigoureuse et ■ promptitude d'action il ■ épargné des grands malheurs à ■ pays. Un tel patriotisme en face d'un danger imminent mérite l'approbation de toute l'Europe, et le Gouvernement Impérial espère qu'il fera toujours preuve d'une sagesse et courage pareils à ceux qu'il a déployés à cette occasion.
(Signé) NELIDOFF."

And on the other side—

"Pour l'amour de Dieu empêchez Milan de faire des folies. Ne sent-il donc pas qu'il risque son trône et l'avenir de son pays par des coups de tête comme celui qu'il vient de faire? Avertissez-lui très-sérieusement des conséquences graves que peut entraîner ■ conduite.
(Signé) GORTSCHAKOFF."¹

¹ TRANSLATION.

"You ■ instructed by the Imperial Government to thank Prince Milan for his recent energetic action. By the vigour and promptitude he displayed he saved his country from great disasters. Such patriotism ■ his in the face of ■ imminent danger merits the approbation of all Europe, and the Imperial Government trusts that he will always exhibit the ■ wisdom and courage ■ he showed ■ this occasion.

"(Signed) NELIDOFF."
(Ambassador at Constantinople.)

"For God's sake stop Milan from playing the fool! Does he not ■ that he is risking his throne and the future of Servia by inconsiderate outbursts like his last one? Warn him very seriously of all the grave consequences his conduct may bring in its train.

"(Signed) GORTSCHAKOFF."
(Russian Chancellor.)

The first time I ■ King Milan was about ■ week after his abdication when ■ was travelling to Pesth, and found that chance had given me the ex-King as a companion in the sleeping car. ■ prophesied then that he would not be very long away, and as ■ matter of fact in three months he was back at the Palace. Though married to a Russian wife,—Queen Natalie was a Mademoiselle Ketchko,—King Milan very soon developed Russophobe tendencies. In these he was supported by his Napredniak or Progressist Minister, M. Garashanin, who ■ ■ desperate at Russian intrigues that he declared war against Bulgaria as a forlorn hope of saving Servia from being absolutely hemmed in.¹ The effect of this war was to decide King Milan to abdicate in favour of his son, with a Council of Ministers presided over by the Queen as Regent. M. Garashanin, however, opposed such an arrangement tooth and nail, and nothing ■ done for a while. Meantime the marital differences between King Milan and his Consort grew into ■ scandal, which ■ terminated by a divorce of doubtful legality, refused by the Metropolitan Michael and pronounced by Bishop Theodosius. Things went from bad to worse, and at length the King agreed to make the best of a very bad job, and give to Servia the democratic constitution it was howling for. When ■ he had made up his mind to this sacrifice he entered into the task with his usual energy, and brought to bear upon it all his unquestionable gifts. The outcome was a liberal Constitution amounting almost to self-government, and far exceeding in the powers given to the subject those of all surrounding States. Having given his people all they had asked for, including a Radical Government, he abdicated, appointing three Regents, of whom only one, M. Ristitch, commanded the slightest consideration, not

¹ He himself told ■ that the entire responsibility of that disastrous campaign ■ his. "We ■ slowly being crushed out of the Balkan councils," he remarked, "and you know the proverb, 'A naked ■ jumps farthest.' We ■ nothing to lose, we were ■ low." It cannot be said, though, that the event bore ■ his theory, for the blow dealt at Servia ■ ■ very serious one.

to speak of respect. The public reputation of General Belimarkovitch ■ very tainted, and General Protitch had apparently no qualifications for the honour bestowed upon him, beyond the fact that his wife ■ notoriously King Milan's first mistress, and that he had ■ great deal to do with the royal relations established with the second. The abdication was the death-knell of Russian influence, and though as long as M. Persiany remained in Belgrade he was able to stem the Austrian tide to a certain degree, it crept remorselessly round, up to, and through Serbia. One great weapon in Austrian hands is the pig and prune trade, on which Serbia practically depends for her existence. Any recalcitrancy can always be met by the screw being here put on, and ■ veto on the export of Servian swine is sufficient to bring Serbia to her knees at any moment. For a long while the Servians neglected their ties with the Sublime Porte, and it was not until Stamboloff began to give indications of ■ Progressist policy in regard to Macedonia that they awoke to the fact that they ■ asleep, whilst their neighbour was busy trying to take away landmarks in the night. In speaking later of Macedonia this subject will be more fully gone into, but it was at the time of my residence at Belgrade that the struggle began in earnest, which has been going on ever since, to obtain ■ preponderance of bishops and schools in this or that district of the province. The outlook at the moment of writing these lines has not improved very sensibly. King Milan has come back and implanted Dr. Vladan Georgevitch—one of his most faithful *ames damnées*—as President of the Council. The appointment naturally called forth all manner of criticism and official denials of King Milan's having exercised any influence in the matter, but it is perfectly certain that neither the young King ■ any political party would have dreamt freely of giving Dr. Georgevitch his present position. He has never been taken ■ *sérieux* even in Serbia, and was always looked upon as rather ■ amusing boon companion—and absolutely nothing else. The nomination either means that there is not a single ■ in Serbia

fit to take the Presidency, ■ else that King Milan—perhaps on account of this fact—has resolved to rule himself through ■ puppet. The experiment may possibly turn out well, for the ex-King has far ■■■ statesmanship than any past or possibly prospective Ministers. It is, moreover, an imperative necessity for Serbia to maintain the Obrenovitch dynasty, ■ against ■ possible return of the old Karageorgievitch, if it wishes to keep its Constitution and democratic privileges. By freely giving these to his people King Milan deserved, if he did not earn, the eternal gratitude of ■ nation which, though it is far yet from being in ■ position properly to enjoy and profit by its advantages, dearly loves and prizes the liberties so generously bestowed. Not being now resident in Serbia, and therefore not being liable to expulsion for *lèse majesté*, I may perhaps hazard an idea that a change, at least for a season, from the weak and capricious government of King Alexander to the firmer and more decided and experienced rule of his father, each of course exercised constitutionally through Ministers, might not be without good fruit. The difference would be, that under King Alexander, the party in power can do just as it pleases, while under King Milan it would have to do ■ he pleased. From the fall he experienced at the hands of the Radicals the ex-King learnt his tether, and, at anyrate, he fell gracefully; and the worst that could happen would be another such becoming descent. If, however, King Alexander wrestled and ■■■ defeated, his fall would be like Lucifer's, and there would be an end of the Obrenovitches.

CHAPTER VIII

ABOUT this time I indulged in several excursions about the Balkan Peninsula, and for the benefit of any who may feel inclined to follow my footsteps—and they might spend a vacation worse—I will devote this chapter to describing some of these wanderings. The first one ■ which I will ask the reader to accompany me led me through Macedonia, almost inevitably destined in the future to become one of the great battlefields of Eastern Europe.¹ I left Nisch on a September morning, and we ran through the usually green and crop-laden country connecting Servia and Macedonia, seeing nothing but fields burnt almost to a cinder from the prolonged drought, with the soil split into gaping cracks, and the maize and vines dusty, dragged, and half dead. Owing to general slackness, and what is called “manœuvring,” we managed to lose an hour and a half in the advertised five hours’ run to the Turkish frontier. Manœuvring is the favourite pastime of the Servian State Railways, and appears to consist in chopping the train in half, taking a moiety away bodily and depositing it ■ a siding, and then bringing it back again, carriage by carriage. At least it gives time and opportunity to the guards and employés to smoke cigarettes and chat with their friends. In our train ■ a paymaster who distributed a fortnight’s wages at every station. The unfortunate officials of the Army Police and other administrations, few of whom had seen a farthing of their salaries for months past, watched the more lucky railway men with envious eyes. So far ■ I could learn, the line alone pays regularly, and is obliged to do ■ to justify its arbitrary confiscation from the

¹ Much of what follows appeared at the time, in substance and often in the same form, in the columns of the *Standard*.

French. At Lebiftcheh transferred to of Baron Hirsch's conveyances, which was change for the better. The ragged and lazy Servians were replaced by equally dilapidated and casual Turks, who, however, the whole, were more polite. Across the frontier the landscape is, if possible, more naked than in Servia. At half-past five reached Gradsko, and there I engaged landau with three bony and unhappy-looking horses and Turkish Jehu. The conveyance itself must have dated from at least fifty years back, and beyond its framework only possessed relics of springs and cushions. Being already very late, Mustapha anxious to start at once; and being of quite the same mind myself, no time was cut to waste, and in ten minutes we were on our way. The road, like most Turkish ones, has been well made, but was in ruinous condition. For the first ten miles or so it leads through parched and barren fields, with here and there a cemetery by the roadside. The tombstones mere slices of stone, stuck pell-mell into the ground, like broken glass on the top of a wall. Some of them are six feet high, others six inches, piled at all possible angles, in desolate disorder. As night came we reached a picturesque gorge, but the brilliant moonlight only showed outlines, and one missed all colour. Towards eleven we rattled rocking down a hill towards the khan at Rakli, where we stopped to bait for an hour or two. A few hundred yards before reaching it, however, the horses shied violently, and very nearly precipitated all to the bottom of a ravine. It turned out that there was nothing terrible than a dead donkey in the way, but there was plenty of evidence that it had lain there some time. It did not to be anybody's particular business to pitch it the edge of the precipice, and I daresay it lay there a month or two longer. At Rakli I was ushered into clean-looking room with three beds, and assured that I could have it all to myself and had nothing to fear. It somewhat late to sling the hammock which I always carried with me, so thought I would try my fate. In half an hour a plate of meat, with bread and cheese and a bottle of wine,

produced and disposed of, and I repaired to my chamber. Alas, I was by no means alone! and in less than ten minutes beat a retreat to the carriage, where I wrapped myself in a rug and snoozed till three, when we started again. After Rakli the road grew worse than ever, but towards ten o'clock we climbed the side of a mountain, from the summit of which we could make out Perlipeh in the plain below. The town is entered from the Christian side, and we passed half a dozen churches with Greek and Bulgarian inscriptions over the portals before crossing a bridge over what ought to be a watercourse, but which was then a dry sewer, to reach the Moslem Quarter. Mustapha, of course, would not dream of putting up at any but a Turkish khan. Here he ordered some food, meat, grapes, and beer to be fetched from the other side of the bridge, where we might just as well have stayed. The market-place was very lively in spite of its being Friday. The majority of the traders were Jews and Christians, Wallachs and Bulgarians, and few shops were shut. The centre of the market is occupied by a lofty octagonal clock tower, a hundred feet high, and round its base the fruit and vegetable sellers collect. From this point the bazaars radiate off in various directions. Besides Manchester and native cloths of every colour and texture, the most conspicuous and favourite objects displayed were nails, bullets, horseshoes, and wire.

Perlipeh is the great distributor of civilisation to the peasantry in all the north of the Vilayet, and to judge from the prominence given to these articles the native consumption must be enormous. I noticed with curiosity that instead of being insured in French, Austrian, or Roumanian companies, many of the shops had the insurance plate of an English office nailed to their fronts. Neither the "Credit Foncier" nor the "Dacia Romana" seemed to have a single client. At noon we started again after paying the heavy tax of one franc for luncheon. Living is distinctly cheap, if not luxurious, in Macedonia. At Rakli, for my dinner, my uninhabitable three-bedded room, and two good cups of coffee and milk before leaving,

the reckoning ■ two francs fifty centimes, travelling, too, in the style of ■ Rothschild. It was, however, with weary limbs and an aching head that I clambered once more into my landau. Fourteen hours of it had left me with the sensation of having been soundly thrashed with ■ shillelagh, and there ■ still six more hours to come. All things have an end, however, and a little before sunset ■ clattered over the stones of Monastir, and I ■ hospitably taken in by our Vice-Consul, Mr. Shipley, who latterly acted ■ British Delegate on the Sassoun Commission, where he earned his C.M.G.

The town, which is conspicuously neat and clean, is very prettily situated, only coming into view just before you reach it, lying as it does behind ■ spur of the mountains amongst a wilderness of field and vineyard. It has ■ long boulevard by the banks of the Dragor, furnished with seats, and very well kept as ■ promenade. The Government House is a handsome and spacious building, and several of the private houses are quite little palaces. Officially the population is put down at thirty-five thousand, but probably forty-two thousand would be nearer the mark, and it is rapidly increasing. All the wealth and intelligence among the inhabitants are to be found amongst the Wallachs, who number some twelve thousand. There are eight or nine thousand Bulgarians, the remainder of the population being Turks, with the exception of some thousands who ■ Jews. Such trade as is not in the hands of the Wallachs goes to the Bulgarians. The Wallachs are a most desirable element, as they take nothing out of the country and are always bringing something in. Each year they wander forth in search of work of any and every kind. In the vilayet of Monastir it is reckoned that the annual exodus is about thirty thousand, each of whom brings, or sends, back on an average twelve Turkish pounds; so that they increase the internal capital by over three hundred thousand a year. The great aim and object of the Hellenic Propaganda is to persuade these Wallachs to call themselves Greeks.¹

¹ After the late war, it is worth noting that genuine petitions ■

In Macedonia the word "Greek" denotes an ecclesiastical rather than an ethnological classification. At least in the neighbourhood of Monastir the thoroughbred Greek is a rarity. The Wallachs of course, relics of the days of Trajan probably, are of Roumanian origin and distinctly Latin proclivities, having nothing Hellenic about them except their profession of the Orthodox faith. Nevertheless, whilst tenaciously adhering amongst themselves to their own Latin speech, they are alive to the advantages of learning Greek for commercial purposes, and consequently often send their children to Greek schools. It is, however, significant that in Monastir there are some three hundred influential families who have set themselves in open opposition even to giving the Hellenic Propagandists the meagre colour for the statement that they are Greeks by patronising their schools. This group has founded purely Roumanian schools, and is on the best of terms with the Ottoman authorities, to whom it is often able to furnish valuable information concerning Greek intrigues. It was this party which, in a great measure, was instrumental in the discovery of the seditious correspondence which was being carried on two years ago between the Greek Consul and a Greek inspector of schools which led primarily to the recall of the Consul, and gradually since to the decline of the position of the Greeks in the province. Up to that time the Greeks had had matters very much their own way, but the Turkish authorities having been put on their guard, began instituting regular domiciliary visits, and established a strict watch on the doings of the community that they were, to speak, knee-haltered. Of the result of the last war has entirely extinguished any hopes the Greeks could ever entertain of sharing the ultimate partition of Macedonia except by favour of one or other of the Powers. When I was in Monastir a very pretty little quarrel was blazing between the Greek powers, temporal and spiritual. The Greek Consul, M. Fontanas, was a Catholic, but a received by the Porte from Wallach villages begging to be left under the suzerainty of the Sultan in preference to Greek rule.

clear and level-headed patriot. The Archbishop, on the other side, ■■■ honest and generally respected prelate, whose fault ■■■ that he played too much the game of the Extremists, and allowed them to make ■ tool of him. When differences arose between M. Fontanas and the more violent of his colony, the Archbishop was persuaded to write three letters, one to M. Dragoumis, one to the Syllogos, and one to the Phanar. According to custom letters are allowed to be carried by hand provided they are duly stamped. From motives of economy, peculiarly Grecian, all the letters were put into one envelope; but the post-office clerk in stamping it felt that there ■■■ more than one enclosure, and his suspicions being aroused, he opened the packet and read the contents. Thus for want of two piastres the intrigue was discovered.

The letters were all in the ■■■ strain, to the effect that if his twenty-five years of service were of any value he begged that weight might be given to his petition for the removal of M. Fontanas, the Catholic Consul, and the payment henceforth direct to himself, or to the Ephors, instead of through the Consulate, of the yearly subvention of twelve hundred pounds. The letters were forwarded, nevertheless, but the ■■■ from M. Dragoumis, sent through M. Fontanas, stated that the Archbishop's request had caused the greatest dissatisfaction, and that, seeing the disgraceful state of ecclesiastical affairs at Monastir, the authorities at headquarters had decided henceforth to discontinue the allowance altogether. I believe ■ a matter of fact that this was ■ mere *brutum fulmen*, and that after a month or ■ payments were resumed; but it had the effect of altogether crushing the Extremists, and the unfortunate Archbishop's furniture was being offered for sale when I left.

The rise of the Bulgarian has been coincident with the fall of the Greek. It has been said that ■ ready frontier might be found for Bulgaria in the old Roman Via Ignatia running from Salonica to Ochrida, and a visit to Macedonia would convince the most sceptical that north of such ■ imaginary boundary the enormous

majority of the population is essentially Bulgarian in speech, manners, and aspirations. Since one of the questions most hotly disputed for the last years, and ■ again threatening to assume formidable proportions, is whether Greeks, Serbs, or Bulgars have by numerical superiority the right to especial protection and favour, or, in other words, to put it ■ plainly, ■ the ultimate heirs to Macedonia, a few facts bearing on the point may not be out of place. One of the first and most crucial tests natural to apply in such cases is that of language. Excluding Northern Albania, nobody will deny that Bulgarian is not only the dominant but almost the universal tongue of the whole Christian and part of the Moslem population of Northern Macedonia. It is not the pure Bulgarian of Sofia ■ Eastern Roumelia, but is unmistakably Bulgarian in contradistinction to Servian. Whereas a Serb, as I had frequent occasion to notice, fails to make himself understood, a Bulgarian is quite at home. The constructions used ■ almost entirely Bulgarian, especially in the added article, which is unknown in Servia, and ■ where the accent occasionally follows the Servian rule the Bulgarian pronunciation of the same words is always readily accepted. Furthermore, one had only to ask a peasant, "Are you ■ Serb?" for him to stare stupidly; whereas to the question, "Are you ■ Bulgar?" his face lit up with ■ broad grin, and he replied, "Yes, yes; ■ are Bulgars!"

A somewhat amusing and characteristic illustration of the power of the Bulgarian language occurred to ■ at a monastery, where I asked the Pope, "Is this a Greek or a Bulgarian Monastery?" He replied, "We are Greeks," but on my addressing a few words to him in that tongue, he answered in Bulgarian that he could not speak Greek. He ■ Greek in so far that he was under the Greek Bishopric, but all the services had to be conducted in Bulgarian, firstly, because they had nobody to officiate in Greek; and secondly, "because nobody would understand a word if they did!" Wishing to go still further, and see what Servian proclivities ■ traditions might have

remained, I asked him which his *Slava* patron saint. The institution of the *Slava* is of the fundamental bases, not only of religious, but of social life in Servia. This Pope did not know what a *Slava* was. But the equivalent Bulgarian term of *Slujba* was, of course, quite familiar to him. There many similar instances, and an explanation of this strange state of affairs must be sought in the keenness of the ecclesiastical contest for supremacy in Macedonia. The Bulgarians, who declare themselves members of the Schismatic Exarchate, have to pay their church dues, and, *ceteris paribus*, those who remain under the Greek Phanar ought to pay theirs; but the Greeks are so anxious to claim every man they that they willing to admit Bulgarians free of charge. It is, of course, not done openly, but simply the dues are not reclaimed, since, though there are Bulgarians who prefer to belong nominally to the hitherto dominant and mother Church of the Greeks without payment towards its support, there is not one who, if he had to pay somebody, would not at once declare himself a schismatic Bulgarian. It is probable, though, that the appointment of Bulgarian bishops will put end to this running with the hare and hounds, since the Bulgarian dissidents, who formerly made to feel their outcast spiritual condition in a hundred material ways, now find themselves strong in the possession of a Metropolitan of equal power and dignity to that of the Greek orthodoxes.

The population of Macedonia is roughly distributed much as follows. The whole of the vast plains cultivated and inhabited exclusively by Bulgarians, who hold and till their fields as "colons" of the Turkish Beys. They surrounded along the feet of the mountains by a chain of Albanian villages, and the towns are peopled with Wallachs and Turks. As the Bulgarians grow richer, however, they take to trading on their own account, and the flourishing town of Perlipch is three-parts Bulgarian. I told that from end to end of Macedonia the of the nomination of Bulgarian bishops had spread till there not a man, woman, or child ignorant of his

improved condition. Owing, nevertheless, to the peculiar unemotional character of the race, it has not much excited ■ puffed them up, nor have they given any occasion of uneasiness to the Ottoman authorities, who, though reticent on this, ■ ■ most other religious ■ administrative questions, are fully alive to the commercial value of these Bulgarian Rayahs, and to the political need of keeping them in good humour, always with ■ due consideration for the maintenance of the Sultan's authority. The ■ employed may be, and doubtless often is, both rough and ready, but ■ did not find that the Bulgars grumbled much, and, in comparison with their fellow-Christians, they seemed the best off of all. Besides Christian Bulgarians, there are some thousands of Moslem Bulgarians, or Pomaks, who still keep up a good deal of sympathy for their native country. A striking instance of this was afforded to my knowledge when the Vilayet Council was sitting at Monastir. Malik Bey, an influential Moslem, was speaking to a rich fellow-member, a Christian, in the language which they both understood best. The Vall remarked to him that he was talking Bulgarian—to which he replied, "Certainly; at root ■ are all Bulgarians here." After all that has been and is being written on the oppression of the Bulgars by the Turks, it ■ pleasing to be able to note on the spot the excellent terms on which they lived, and the entire freedom of speech and customs accorded to Christians in so comparatively remote a centre as Monastir.

It is in such towns, and there alone, that ■ accurate idea can be formed of the struggle between the Balkan nationalities. The chances at the time of my visit seemed all in favour of the Bulgarians, who since 1764, when the Porte placed them ecclesiastically under the Greek Patriarchate, have maintained ■ dogged fight against this episcopal subjection. They closed their churches that ■ Greek liturgy should not be read in them, and as soon ■ ■ Greek bishop entered to officiate, no Bulgarian priest would take part in the service. After the stranger's departure, the floor was ostentatiously swept, ■ if to do

away with all traces of impurity. The contest went on passively all over Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Eastern Roumelia, until in Bulgaria proper they carried the day. They have now won it in Macedonia. Up till twenty years ago the Servian Church might, by offering emancipation from the Greek thrall, have gained over the entire Slav population of the Turkish provinces. But it foolishly missed its opportunity—gone ■■■■ to recur. The protection Serbia can now afford is not at all more efficacious than that which Sofia can offer, and, regrettable ■ it may appear from ■ Servian point of view, the old dream of reconstituting the ancient empire must be considered ■ for ever dispelled. The only lever upon which the Servians could rely was the Church, and that has now lost its *fulcrum*, since the Bulgarians to-day have their own Church in Macedonia, giving birth to a new national spirit and pride. The Greek element has still fewer chances of success in Macedonia proper. Putting on one side the war of this year (1897), the only opening they really ever had was in Southern Albania. But in order to win they must entirely change their methods. The Albanian Beys are nobles and chieftains with a vast amount of native dignity, and it is only by flattering their weaknesses that any Hellenic propaganda can be pushed. Hitherto it has been thought sufficient, as one of these Albanians remarked to me, to send "a barber from Athens" to civilise and conciliate the haughty clansmen.

After my observations, I wrote at that time—in 1889—in the *Standard*: "To summarise the situation of Northern Macedonia, and by this term I ■■■■ the country north of a line drawn between Salonica and Durazzo, there is no risk in stating that the Servian element is practically non-existent; in fact, ■ one of the local papers puts it, 'You must go out with ■ lantern to search for a Servian.' The Greek ■■■■ has in itself the seeds of dissolution, and the Wallach community, on whom it reckons for disciples, is Greek in nothing but faith. The Bulgarian, on the other hand, is favoured by the Turks, enjoys an ■■■■ numerical superiority, and is thoroughly solid both here

in Macedonia, and in its relations with Bulgaria proper." The only modification which I might now feel inclined to make in the above is that the Ottoman Government has lately been according at least equal, and sometimes superior privileges, scholastic and episcopal, to the Servians ■ to the Bulgars.

I spent ■ week or ten days very pleasantly at Monastir, principally in short shooting excursions with Mr. Shipley. I only had ■ ancient French pin-fire gun, borrowed from the French Vice-Consul at Nisch, and my companion had not been out probably a dozen times in his life. We had no dogs either, but nevertheless succeeded in keeping all the Consular Corps supplied with hares and partridges, which literally swarm in the neighbourhood. Though my gun persistently hung fire even when it finally went off, and refused to act at least once out of three attempts, we used to bring back fifty or sixty of the little grey birds in an afternoon. Our great exploit was a bear hunt, organised to compass the destruction of one of these animals, reputed to be of great size and ferocity, and to roam the suburbs of the town. Besides ourselves, two or three foreigners joined the party, ■ gentleman with the avowed object only of shooting any stray hares or foxes which might be beaten out of cover, ■ he declared his confidence in the non-existence of the bear, which he said he would never dream of running any risk of meeting. We started one evening and rode out to a village where the beaters were supposed to assemble under the direction of ■ sporting Pope, who was admitted by universal consent to be the champion hunter of Monastir. This divine, however, disappointed us by coming in ■■ after sunset and saying that he had a baptism, or burial, or some other office, to perform that night; but he promised to meet ■ at the rendezvous next morning at daybreak. This plunged some of our foreign friends into despondency, ■ they declared nobody but ■ Englishman would ■■ think of going out shooting with ■ priest, the mere sight of one being quite enough to cast ill-luck over a day's bag.¹

¹ In the same manner it is against ■ etiquette abroad to wish ■ departing

Early rose next morning, to ride for an hour or so to the top of one of the hills, found the priest contentedly sitting on a rock waiting for us, and he at assumed command, placing the guns along the tops of the hills, and beating the valleys up to us. This went on through all the supposed favourite haunts of the bear without result, and at five the Pope very regretfully intimated that his clerical duties again called him away. He besought us, however, not to lose hope, and to beat a small ravine close to the gardens of Monastir, where should inevitably find our quarry. As it more or less on our way, followed his advice, and I posted the guns this time, taking myself the head of the gully, past which the bear must if bear there was. Almost all the beaters were armed with guns and rifles, in spite of my remonstrances, and two of these ruffians, instead of going into cover, scaled the bare cliff opposite, and sat down overlooking the thicket. The shouting and drumming had not been long in progress before cries of "The bear!" were raised, and just as I expected, he came along the ravine straight for me. I could hear him crashing through the bushes, and counted him good dead, when my two scouts began yelling at the top of their voices, and rushed down to where they could see the bear, firing wildly as they went. This, of course, turned him, and I was furious that I had to throw away my rifle, else I verily believe I should have shot one of my disturbers "by mistake." In another moment a regular volley broke out just on the line of guns, and was continued till about forty shots must have been fired. Hurrying up, I just descried my bear going very slowly up the mountain, but still too fast to give any hope of intercepting him. It seems he had made straight for the hare-shooter, and almost knocked him down as he rolled past within a foot of him. This hero chasseur "good luck." I have known a very keen sportsman simply back from his door, whence he was sallying forth with his dogs, and give up his day, because somebody, with best of intentions, wished him good luck. A Frenchman always says, "Mauvaise chance!" and a Russian, "May you see neither fur nor feather!"

had only small shot in his gun, but nevertheless let fly, and then half a dozen beaters joined in. As he was nearing a stream, the bear was hard hit by one of the bullets, and was distinctly seen to lie down for a moment in the water, and both the banks were dappled with blood. The next time he appeared, though, he was half a mile off, well out of range, and going strong if deliberately. We never saw or heard of that bear again, but it took me several days to recover my equanimity. Monastir lost its charm for me, and I arranged a picnicking excursion towards the Greek frontier, consisting of the Russian Consul, M. Demeric; the Greek, M. Fontanas; the Servian, M. Body; Shipley, and myself. We two shared a carriage, the usual rickety old carcase, with four horses of uncertain age and decided unsoundness, harnessed abreast, and left at five in the morning. The first rain for several months had fallen the day before, and the summit of the Peristeri was capped in snow, whilst a cool fresh breeze fanned the dried-up plains of Monastir. The first village passed on the road was Negotchanch, where all the notables, assisted by the major part of the peasants, were engaged in skinning and dissecting an ox which had been slaughtered by the roadside. At this stage one of our carriage springs broke, which augured ill for the future, but after patching it up with string it held good for the rest of the journey in some mysterious manner, although the vehicle ever afterwards had a disagreeable list to the off side, making it impossible either to sit or to keep the luggage on the seat without slipping. Later, the brilliantly whitewashed walls of the Church of Vrbina shone gaily through the trees, and we pulled up at a neat-looking khan kept by a Wallach. The whole village, however, is Bulgarian, and the church has a curious story. It was built by the schismatic villagers on a piece of ground which happened to belong to an Orthodox Greek convent. Nothing was said when the church was completed, when the Greeks claimed it. The result of a lawsuit established their title to the ground, and neither party could or would buy the other out, the church remained

unconsecrated till a few days before our seeing it—a deplorable monument of religious bickering.

After leaving Vrbina, the road is somewhat monotonous, running mile after mile — the flat, till at length Banitza is sighted on the left and Florina on the right, the one perched half-way up the mountain, the other far away at its foot. Here — dived into a gorge, and then wound slowly upwards till the summit — reached and we looked down on another plain, and a glistening sheet of water—the Petrosco Lake—beneath us. This lake has sandy shores, without a tree or rush on its edges, and is probably brackish, though the peasants declare it is drinkable and contains fish. A few kilometres to the right of the main road is the Bulgarian village of Eksi Soo, — Bitter Water, and an extremely nasty beverage it is. The inhabitants, however, have none other, and seem to thrive. A strange pungent smell assails one all round Eksi Soo, which proceeds from the sheaves of the aniseed plant drying in front of every cottage. It is used for flavouring *mastic*, or *raki*, and constitutes one of the principal industries of the place. Continuing from Eksi Soo, we crossed a neck of the Sari Gueul Lake, or rather marsh. Most of it was then dry, but in the distance the sun glinted on water under the hills.

We were now well in the brigand districts, a band of five — six having been captured only a few months previously on the edges of the Sari Gueul. It was six o'clock already when we reached Kailar, and — of — companions — rather for passing the night there, but the place did not look inviting. We had already emerged from the Bulgarian zone, and south of Eksi Soo were amongst Turks and Greeks. A very mixed crowd was hanging about the gates of the khan, most of them having the appearance of natives of Asia Minor, amongst them being a Soudan Arab, a rich man, apparently, who had come down from Uskub on business. He — much surprised at being addressed in vernacular Arabic. The Caimacam, who had only lately been appointed, was, like most of his *confrères*, an Albanian; indeed, the patronage

of official posts in Macedonia — then principally in the hands of Dervish Pasha at Constantinople, who named Albanians as Governors, Caimacams, and Mudirs of every district. The lights were already being lit — we left Kailar with a special mounted guide to point out the dangerous parts of the road, which, except in the matter of bridges, was in fairly good repair. These, however, — mostly broken down, and have to be avoided by a *détour* in the fields, or through the then dry river-beds. Throughout the Monastir vilayet the highways were creditably kept, but in the Salonica province they — detestable, and I know not which — the weariest, the jaded and flogged horses, or the sore and shaken foreigners sitting behind them. It was just ten at night as we rattled over the stones and drew up before the principal hostelry of Kojaneh. Those who have performed similar journeys, and they alone, may imagine — condition after seventeen hours cramped up in a springless carriage, which always went too fast to allow of one's getting out and walking. Those who have not tried it — never gain an idea of what it is from any description. The khan proprietor was profuse in his promises of producing anything and everything, and in answer to whatever question answered "Yes." Amongst other products of the country he thus pleaded to having what every Englishman most abhors at night, and was much put out when he discovered the mistake he had made in his zeal.

The Caimacam of Kojaneh was a jovial Albanian, who had spent most of his life, as he frankly admitted, as a *Bashi Bozook*. He could neither read nor write Turkish nor any other language—a decided drawback to a man's exercising his powerful jurisdiction over a population the majority of which are more or less educated Christians. At the same time, he was not disliked, and the worst complaint brought against him was his exaggerated idea of his own importance—a fault common to many greater — A good deal was being said about — alleged abuse of power — his part, and our Vice-Consular party — pains to find out the real truth of the story,

which was arrived at not without some difficulty, and ■ as follows. It is worth giving at length ■ an illustration of habitual distortion of facts. The original version, which aroused much indignation at Athens, and, *magnas componere parvis*, at Monastir, was that the Turks had thrown a dozen influential Greeks into prison on evidence obtained by force, and without giving them ■ hearing, had condemned them to various terms of imprisonment. By Greek, of course, was meant not Greek subjects, but Rayahs, of Greek faith and speech. The actual circumstances ■ these. Some time ago ■ Greek doctor of the ■ of Chiminaki made ■ large fortune, that is to say, about fifteen thousand pounds, and left Kojaneh. Amongst his relatives and presumptive heirs was a certain Rompapa, related by marriage to the Mayor of Kojaneh. This man conceived the idea of getting rid of other possible co-heirs, and assassinated two of them without punishment. This he did by sending armed scoundrels to their houses, and the murders were put down vaguely to robbers. Partly in order to get rid of the remaining heirs, and partly to please the Mayor, who had shielded him, and who ■ ■ variance with the Greek Metropolitan, Rompapa concocted a plan whereby the ends of both might be served. A fictitious robbery was effected at Rompapa's, and he complained to the Caimacam, saying he knew the culprits. On being asked, he readily produced a list of about forty ■. The Caimacam then summoned the Ikhtiar Medjlissy, ■ Council of Elders (Christian), and told them they must confirm the accusations of Rompapa, or at anyrate find out the robbers, as they ■ the representatives of the town, and on them rested the responsibility for knowing the characters of their fellow-townsmen. There is ■ beautiful simplicity about this method of pinning criminals, but I only record what actually took place! Amongst the Elders were several creatures of Rompapa, with the Mayor, who quickly picked out eleven ■ ■ being those of men of notorious ill-fame and in league with brigands. The latter part of the indictment would generally apply to

about half the population of these parts. Rompapa had, however, the cunning to include one or two real bad characters in his list together with those of whom he wished to be rid. This made his accusations plausible, but still many Elders refused to sign. Upon this the Caimacam intervened, and declared that after the fashion of British juries they would be locked up until they were of one mind. After an hour or two, seeing no alternative before them, all signed the list of eleven names; and the men, several of them respectable and influential citizens, were marched in chains to Serfitcheh, where they were tried by court-martial and condemned to twelve years' imprisonment at Fazan. The Despot (or Greek Bishop), of whose chief supporters among the prisoners, complained to Constantinople, and a Commissioner was sent to inquire into this and another matter. He was still inquiring, and the prisoners still in prison at Serfitcheh, awaiting deportation to Fazan. Rompapa, of course, gained his end, since few convicts return from Fazan, and at anyrate he was quit of his rivals for twelve years. On the other hand, the Anti-Despot party won a point in the game, though it was by means that they would have been off victorious in the end. The reason for the ill-feeling between the Despot and the Caimacam proved to be this. On the evening of the 1st of May an annual fair was in progress of preparation at the village of Aya Paraskevi. Four soldiers were sent to keep order, and they billeted themselves in one of the largest houses, and drank freely. In the evening, when thoroughly drunk, they pursued the women of the house, who barricaded themselves in one of the rooms, whilst their men-folk hastened to Kojaneh to complain. Having roused up the Despot, they went immediately at midnight to wake the Caimacam, who was sulky, and offered them no redress. In consequence the Despot wrote a formal report to Stamboul, which annoyed the Caimacam, but beyond this there appeared to be no bad blood between them. The incident is only mentioned as possible for the Caimacam's feeling

certain satisfaction at sending the Despot's friends to prison.

Though ■ degree of responsibility, of course, rested with the Caimacam, the chief blame undoubtedly fell on the Christians themselves, who, ■■■ in a small place like Kojaneh, are torn with the same dissensions which disgrace their mutual relations all ■■■ the Ottoman Empire, and bring the name into contempt with the Moslems. If the Turk occasionally profits by them to gratify a personal pique, it seems scarcely fair at ■■■ to saddle him with an atrocity. Of the proceedings at the court-martial of Serfitcheh we ■■■ unable to obtain absolutely reliable information, but probably the witnesses brought by Rom-papa and his party, either truly or falsely, swore political evidence, otherwise the Court would hardly have inflicted such heavy sentences. As regards the Caimacam, the conviction ■■ carried away was that he had simply acted according to his lights, in consonance with information laid, and pressure put upon him by a strong division of the Christian population. The only hope of getting at the truth in such cases is by seeking for motives, and he had no personal motive whatever for punishing innocent Christians. Yet this case was dished up in the local press all over the Balkans as ■ Turkish atrocity ■■ peaceable Christians.

As far ■ liberty of the subject goes in daily life, the town of Kojaneh might be in Servia, Roumania, ■ Bulgaria. The Christians have their church—a very fine one—in which some of us attended ■ baptismal service, and a lofty belfry tower (a great sign of religious freedom) dominates the whole place, whilst there is not ■ mosque for miles round. The only Moslems in Kojaneh were the few officials of the Konak, and ■ force of six policemen, perhaps a dozen or fifteen in all. The Greek language is universally spoken, and the Despot possesses ■■■ of the handsomest houses in the principal street. This prelate, with whom I had several conversations, professed himself fairly satisfied with his position generally, and with a little knowledge of the state of affairs to help one, it was easy

to trace the few difficulties he had to complain of rather ■ intrigues of his flock than to any abuse of authority by the Turks. Lying ■ it does far out of the beaten track, in the heart of a Turkish vilayet, Kojaneh may be taken as a fair sample of the life of ■ Christian town in European Turkey. There may be isolated instances of even ■ happily constituted communities, as there certainly ■ numerous ones of worse-off towns and districts ; but taking the good with the bad, Kojaneh may stand as ■ average picture, and it is for this reason that I have devoted ■ much space to ■ sketch of it.

The fatigues of our drive to Kojaneh, and the lively night passed by the foreign Vice-Consuls in ■ Greek house, so damped their ardour that they elected to leave it to their colleague Shipley to prosecute inquiries further. Shipley and myself had slept at the khan, the former being ■ of those happy mortals impervious to the insect creation, and I, in my hammock, being out of reach. Our next halting-place ■ Shatista, of whose Mudir we had heard gruesome tales along the road. These turned out to be only too true, and a list of this man's misdeeds would fill several pages.¹ He openly boasted of the number of victims to his ■ hand in the Bulgarian massacres, and shamelessly employed the Imperial troops to protect him in his acts of rapine and violence.

At Lapsista, again, ■ stayed for a day or two, and gathered ■ good deal of information, returning back by way of Kastoria and Florina to Monastir. I may add that neither such details as were published at the time in the *Standard*, nor the repeated and strongly-worded reports of the Monastir Consular Corps to their Constantinople Embassies, had the slightest effect upon the position of the Mudir of Shatista, beyond causing him to be shifted to another post not far off, where he continued, unmolested to harry the populace.

Another very interesting trip I took, ■ this occasion unaccompanied, ■ across Bosnia - Herzegovina and Montenegro. Embarking at Belgrade, ■ steamed to Brod

¹ See Appendix A, p. 165.

with ■ mongrel Austrian servant, who had ■ some time of his ■ been ■ coachman, and pretended to ■ great knowledge of horseflesh. At Brod I bought a little pony and rough country cart, on which to carry my belongings, especially a photographic camera, and we started for Serajevo. The first day took ■ to Dervent, and the second to Kotorsko, and by then I ■ heartily tired of Franz, who was one of the most lazy, incompetent, and complete fools I have ever employed. I therefore packed a few toilet necessities in a small bag slung over my shoulder, and instructing him to meet ■ at Serajevo, went off ■ foot before dawn, not stopping till I reached Zeptchch, a distance by milestones on the road of about ninety kilometres, though now and again I took ■ short cut. At ■ I passed Tesanj, where the Austrian police made an attempt to stop me, and ■ after crossed ■ river at Maglai, where the Austrian cavalry ■ fearfully cut up during the insurrection. Both Tesanj and Maglai are wonderfully pretty and picturesque. From Zeptchch I went on to Vranduk, where I had ■ food, and so to Zenitza, where the great convict prisons are. I stayed here ■ day looking over them, being rather interested in this branch of administration since the days when I had been sent with Colonel Chermside to report on Egyptian Prisons. Like everything else the Austrians have done in Bosnia, the Zenitza establishment is a perfect model. There are most extensive workshops in connection with it, and I purchased several little odds and ends as souvenirs, amongst others a carved wooden spoon. On leaving Zenitza, I took it easy, and after reaching Visoko, noticed that I had somehow lost my spoon. The following afternoon I entered Serajevo, and called on the Governor to report myself. There appeared, however, to be not much necessity for my giving him any information ■ to my route, ■ he knew every house at which I had stopped, and every ■ apparently to whom I had spoken, and as I ■ leaving he presented ■ with my lost spoon, which had got there before me, as ■ token of the efficiency of his police. I spent ■ week at Serajevo, being ■

hospitably entreated by our Consul-General, Mr. Freeman, and looked upon by society as an original sort of lunatic, travelling on foot without any wardrobe, on which account I ■■■ permitted to attend evening parties in my only rough tweed suit. There ■■■ little shops, mostly kept by Jews, in almost every village, and my system ■■■ to throw away my underclothing whenever I bought new, so that I ■■■ had more to carry than what ■■■ on my back. This ■■■ ■ method of travel which hugely diverted the good people wherever I passed; but I can confidently recommend it.

After selling my horse and cart at Serajevo, and sending Franz back to Belgrade, I drove ■■■ morning to Ostrova, and then tramped to Mostar, down the magnificent valley of the Narenta, fishing, with but poor success, on the way. Mostar is a lovely old town, and I spent a day or two in roaming about it before sallying forth again to Trebinje, and on to Ragusa, another fine relic of the Italian domination, with the Lion of Saint Marc rampant over many of its old gateways. Here I took steamer, in order to see the beautiful Bocche di Cattaro, at which place I arrived next morning. Ordering a carriage, I sat down to lunch off a giant lobster; but when the vehicle arrived, the driver wanted three napoleons to take ■■■ to Cetinje. Thinking this ■■■ ■ attempt at extortion, I pooh-poohed the idea; but Jehu stood firm, till I declared ■ would rather walk. He smiled sarcastically, and replied, "As your excellency pleases," and went away. After ■■■ difficulty, I engaged ■ guide, ■ youth of about seventeen, who asked for five out of the twenty francs ■ had been obliged to promise, to leave with his mother. He soon after appeared in ■ ■■ pair of *opankas*, or leather sandals, and looked rather pityingly ■ my heavy walking-boots as we started ■ noon in ■ blazing sun to go up the face of the mountain. Needless to say that, though burdened with my greatcoat and bag, and later ■ with ■■■ of my other clothing, he went up much faster than I did, and kept repeating what ■ mistake my boots were. On reaching ■■ top at last, we could throw

a stone down to fall within ■ few yards of where ■ had begun the ascent, so sheer is the climb. The carriage-road circumvents the difficulty by about forty elbows. After this, we went gaily across the Negush plain; but though our pace ■ now good, we ■ caught up by a Montenegrin girl, to whose care my young rascal, without asking my consent, transferred the whole of my kit, which she hoisted on her back, and, unfurling her umbrella, continued like ■ hare.

I remonstrated with him, ■ his laziness first, and then on the risk of losing the things; but he shrugged his shoulders, and said he had already paid her—two francs, ■ transpired—and that ■ should find everything right enough at the hotel. After Negush plain, there is another lesser mountain to top, after which ■ precipitous descent into the Cetinje plain, across which runs the last ten or twelve miles of road. On the summit of the second range ■ rested a few minutes, and then I took my guide down remorselessly at a gallop. Before we reached the bottom he cried for mercy, saying his sandals were cut to pieces and his feet were sore. The advantage was now all on the side of English boots, and ■ Cetinje was in distant sight, ■ bade him follow as he liked, and went on by myself, finally reaching the hotel of the Montenegrin capital nearly three-quarters of ■ hour before the carriage, which had found other customers, and left Cattaro at the ■ time.¹

Cetinje is decidedly the queerest capital in Europe. It consists of ■ long street, with four smaller ■ crossing it, and ending vaguely in the fields. The whole town covers, perhaps, thirty ■ forty ■. The principal

¹ The question of foot-gear is always much debated, but for all-round work I doubt if ■ English small hobnailed boot is to be beaten. The only thing in my experience ■ be compared to it is the Russian sandal, which is far more stoutly made than that of any other nation I have seen, and of a kind of leather which ■ procurable elsewhere. I have frequently given ■ of these to be copied, but though the ■ looked all ■ when delivered, a few hours' use in marsh, or snow, ■ mud, reduced it to a wretched rag of leather, whereas ■ Russian always keeps its shape, ■ an almost perfect protection, whilst affording also perfect freedom ■ the foot, and ■ so light as scarcely to drag ■ all, even after fourteen or fifteen hours' walking.

building is the hotel, which worthily acts ■ terminus to the main street. It is a bare and rickety structure, but represents the acmé of luxury ■ Cetinje. Other public places are the prison, the church, and the school. The first of these lies on the right, and in front of the gates, ■ a lawn, the prisoners amuse themselves by playing various rude games—bowls, with pieces of rock for balls, leap-frog, and so on. A few of them are engaged in odd building jobs about Cetinje, and others hew wood in the mountain. They ■ not chained, but seldom appear to think of running away. When a ■ of evasion happens, one or two fellow-convicts are sent to capture the runaway and bring him back. The theory of setting a thief to catch ■ thief is here practised most literally and methodically. The only difference, outwardly, between ■ condemned convict and ■ free citizen is that the former is deprived of his arms. In Montenegro this is an equal degradation to the usual dress or brand elsewhere. Close to the hotel is the Royal Palace, a whitewashed house with green Venetian blinds, which is popularly supposed to have cost a million of francs, owing to the expense of transporting material. Over against it is a long low red building, known as the "Bigliardo." It received this nickname from an English billiard-table having been set up there. The carrying of this unwieldy piece of furniture by fifty strong ■ the mountain ■ considered, ■ it really was, a great feat. Whilst the porters struggled manfully under the slate, ■ pilot stood astride it on high, and shouted his directions as to how best to get round awkward corners. The "Bigliardo" is now used ■ offices for the different Ministries and as ■ Parliament House. The church is very small—capable, perhaps, of holding ■ hundred and fifty people. On either side of the entrance ■ the tombs of Prince Danilo and his brother Mirko Petrovitch, and in the chancel ■ sort of sarcophagus, opened only on solemn occasions, containing the embalmed remains of the bishop-prince, Peter the First. Sixty ■ seventy years ago this monastery, and twenty or thirty cottages round it, represented the town of Cetinje. Behind the monastery is

the famous "Tower of Skulls." In the old days, ■■■ Montenegrin ■■■ entitled to call himself an able-bodied soldier till he had decorated the tower with a Turkish head. The last occasion on which it showed its ghastly trophies was after the battle of Grahovo, which was fought on the 13th of July 1859. The Montenegrins lost four hundred men, and brought in four thousand skulls—at least so says tradition. The account is ■■■ or less confirmed by independent witnesses, one of whom, an Austrian officer, counted two thousand three hundred skeletons on the field several weeks afterwards. The custom has, however, now died out, having been abolished, together with most practices of ■ similar nature, by the Draconian code and inflexible rule of Danilo I. This prince endeavoured to put an end to the vendetta, amongst other barbarities, and his successor, the present sovereign, carried on the reform with such energy that, although ■ first his subjects refused to believe in the sincerity of his determination, a few summary executions of offenders sufficed entirely to stamp out the crime, which is ■■■ the object of a special convention with Turkey. The last instance of vendetta occurred in the beginning of 1889, when an officer of Prince Nicolas' household, smarting under the *rimbecco*, or taunt of having an unavenged death in his family, decoyed ■■■ relatives of the murderer into ■ boat on the Lake of Scutari, and there assassinated them. With ■■■ reluctance, he was sentenced to be shot at Rieka, on the shores of the lake, and he fell before the firing party, with the cry, "Long live Prince Nicolas! Long live his family!"

The sentiment of blind devotion to the sovereign is probably coloured with a religious tinge from the days when the ruler was Vladika, or supreme head of the Church as well as of the State. It is in itself a priceless guarantee of national unity and order. Amidst the dynastic questions which have ■ often wrecked, and constantly trouble, the Balkans, there never has been, and never will be, any wavering in the loyalty of the Montenegrins for their Prince and his stock. Together with this feeling of almost worshipful ■■■ for the authority of

the Palace there exists ■ pleasant ■ of individual equality. The Prince has been designed by Providence to govern, but his family and relations are not otherwise distinguished from those around them. The Princess Milena was a peasant girl who ■ day washed the feet of the royal traveller in her father's cottage, as she would have washed yours or mine. Now she stretches her hand to be kissed by the Grand Dukes of Russia. In the street of Cettinje, or under the Tree of Justice, Prince Nicolas and his family could not be picked out by a stranger from the rest of the crowd. Jealous and proud ■ they are of certain appurtenances of rank, especially when abroad or in the presence of foreigners, the Montenegrins ■ essentially republican in their daily habits. A group of three or four may be ■ smoking round a table or taking an evening stroll, all dressed alike, with ■ arsenal in their belts, and the inevitable *strouka*, or goats'-hair blanket, thrown ■ the shoulder. One is perhaps the hotel proprietor (a Petrovitch, nearly related to the Prince), the second the Minister for War, the third a tailor, the fourth ■ sheep-owner, and the ■ the President of the Senate. The priests have ■ distinctive costume, but ■ readily be recognised by their long hair and beards, and by their carrying ■ weapons in time of peace. As a rule, the men wear only ■ moustache, and it is thought slovenly for any but ■ priest to let the beard grow. The Montenegrin race presents ■ almost perfect embodiment of all that is admirable in physique. The average height is over six feet, and their frames are splendidly proportioned, broad and deep in the chest and lean in the loins, with long sinewy limbs, and not an ■ of spare flesh. They offer a grand example of the survival of the fittest, as they take very little care of their children, and only the sound and the strong grow up. In after life, too, they are extremely ■ to sanitary precautions or medical treatment, and a sick Montenegrin is almost synonymous with a dead ■. At least, he at once gives himself up, like a Bedouin for the matter of that, and if he recovers looks upon it ■ a curious freak in Nature's laws. They have ■ fear of

death, and endure the severest bodily pain with incredible fortitude. The few who reluctantly submit to losing an arm or leg invariably refuse anæsthetics, and converse with their friends, smoking a cigarette, whilst the knife and saw are at work. The doctor of the hospital has consequently very little to do beyond making unique observations on this unique people. If the men are remarkable in many ways, their wives and daughters are little less so in others. The Montenegrin ladies play the secondary rôle which always falls to their sex in patriarchal communities. In the lower classes they perform the whole work of the house and fields, tilling the soil, gathering the harvest, and building their cottages, whilst their lords and masters play backgammon, or otherwise amuse themselves in each other's company. In the better ranks they still take a very unequal half of life, staying at home all day, and bearing all the little worries of existence, leaving the sweets for mankind. The result of centuries of this training has been to obliterate much of the natural feminine grace and timidity from their manners and character. But whilst treating them with scant outward marks of admiration, the Montenegrin has a profound respect, never better merited, for the virtues of his women, and in few places could a young girl enjoy such liberty of action and movement as in the Black Mountain. It is common to meet a peasant maid of fifteen or sixteen half-way between Cetinje and Cattaro, a journey which she will make two or three times a week, there and back over the thirty miles, to sell eggs and buy fish. And betide the man who should offer her the slightest insult by word or look.

After a day or two, I was invited to attend the consecration of a new church on one of the islands on the Scutari Lake, and a special steamer conveyed a select party, including several of the Ministers, to the spot. After the ceremony concluded, general festivities began, and dancing was in full swing. Most of the crowd roasted their food and ate their meals on the grass; but the Ministers had a rough extempore table made of

planks. Rarely have I sat down to ■ heavily-laden board or ■ that ■ so quickly cleared. It was a veritable Viking feast, and ■ might have been in ■ Norwegian fiord for the wildness of the surrounding scenery. The wine was brought round in ordinary zinc pails, and glasses were despised. We were all very sleepy ■ the homeward journey, I remember, and I fancy there must have been ■ good deal of what the French playfully call *hair ache* next morning.

At length I exhausted the pleasures of Cetinje, even to ■ peripatetic circus which in its wanderings had managed to reach this Arcadia, and prepared to continue my tour. My intention was to cross the lake and then strike ■ Macedonia to Salonica. On reaching Rieka, though, I found no steamer, and to pass the time followed one of the larger streams up towards its source, in the hope of getting a fry of trout for dinner. After half a mile or so, I came to a spot where the water trickled over ■ large, smooth moss-grown stones, and fell some forty ■ fifty feet. The breadth was not more than perhaps twenty feet, and as I wished to cross, I cautiously felt my way over, with the water just over the toes of my boots. Half-way I suddenly felt the stone on which I trod shift, and the next moment I was over. I had not time to save myself, or to think more than that there ■ ■ end of the *Standard* correspondent. I picked myself up after ■ while, hardly believing it possible that I was still alive, but found I could walk and that my ■ seemed in working order. As soon ■ I had realised this, I fainted again. This happened ■ or twice, when ■ peasant ■ ■ up. They ■ as astonished to see ■ on my feet as I myself had been to be able to stand, and said that they had seen me fall, turn ■ complete somersault in the air, and come down "smash" ■ the rocky bed of the stream, where I had lain ■ the wet revived me. I had to walk about a mile or more to the inn, supported by the girls, and there I examined myself again, to discover that two of my ribs were certainly damaged, my left wrist badly sprained, and the same arm slightly splintered,

whilst my left thigh was already turning all colours. I must have first touched with my ■■■ and leg, and the ■■■ doubling up, exposed the ribs. My watch, ■ heavy double hunter, ■■ smashed to atoms, ■■■ the jewels in the holes being punched out. It was, in fact, through the watch, so to speak, that my ribs had been cracked. I swallowed a whole decanter of *raki*, but even that could not prevent ■■ from shivering with cold, though it was hot summer. This, of course, was the effect of shock. The only thing I could do was to call for ■■■ starch, tear up my shirt, dip it in, and wrap it tightly round my chest and arm. This relieved my breathing considerably, and in an hour ■■ I began to feel ■■■ comfortable. Luckily, a carriage happened to pass later on, and ■■ of the occupants at ■■■ volunteered to give me his place to Cetinje, and at the same time his *strouka*, ■■ blanket, ■■ that I ■■■ able to reach the hotel late the ■■■ night. Next morning the only serious pain I felt ■■ in my sprained wrist, and the Prince's doctor said that he preferred not to remove my extemporary bandages, upon which he could not improve.¹ I stayed in bed the next day, but joined the *table d'hôte* ■■ that following, and on the third ■■■ offered ■■ seat down to Cattaro in the carriage of ■■ French tourist and his wife. Having, of course, to give up my prolonged trip, I went slowly back along the Dalmatian coast, stopping ■■ day here and there, and exploring Ragusa, Spalato, Sebenico, Zara, and ■■ to Fiume, where I took train to Agram, to Pesth, and thus to Belgrade, where I was soon playing tennis again.

Before leaving Montenegro I was in want of ready money, and ■■ asked the hotel proprietor to cash ■■ cheque for me. He professed perfect readiness to do so, and I wrote him one for twenty pounds. After ■■ while, he came back rather crestfallen and apologetic, saying that

¹ The official journal contained ■■ account of this accident, concluding with 'Thanks to God and the springiness of his ribs, the Englishman is not much ■■ worse.' In ■■ account the height of the fall on to naked rock ■■ put ■■ thirty metres, but anybody ■■ ■■ and ■■ the place and judge for themselves, as it became quite ■■ show, and any peasant of Rieka will point it out, near the ■■ mill.

unfortunately the Finance Minister ■■■ away, and the Treasury shut. He had been through the whole town and had collected about fifteen pounds, but there ■■■ no ■■■ money to be had! Is not this ■ delightful ■■■ mentary on the little needs of Montenegrins? The fact is that they oblige each other with necessities mutually, and have little want of cash. When they require any, they send a "diligence"—namely, a ■■■ on ■ mule—to Cattaro to get it from their bankers, who all live there, and this is what I had to do with my cheque. It would be easy to write a good deal ■■■ ■ the habits and life of Cetinje, and it is somewhat surprising that nobody appears yet to have taken the trouble to do so. Beyond one work in Russian, and another in French, written in reality by a Servian officer, I know of nothing of any value that has been published ■ Montenegro. Even for a passing visit it would be hard to find any place with so many original attractions. Like Japan, however, it will probably get spoilt ■ soon as it is included amongst the happy hunting-grounds of the globe-trotter. At present a country where there are no bankers and ■ lawyers, ■ Jews and ■ policemen, without a Custom House or a Passport Office, and with its frontiers marked by hand-posts with Montenegro on one side and the other country ■ the other, sounds like ■■■ imaginary Utopia. But it is a real State, and its name is Montenegro. Long life to it!

APPENDIX A

The Mudir of Shatista ■■■ a comparatively young man of about thirty-five, named Fetih Effendi. At about an hour's distance from Shatista was ■ village called Serushina, where there was a beautiful meadow through which ■■■ a small stream. This was the spot chosen by Fetih for many of his atrocities. His factotum ■ such occasions was ■ ferocious Albanian called Ghikas, who ■■ nominally ■ watchman ■ rural policeman of Serushina. Amongst his exploits he ■■■ summoned about fifty

notables from Shatista to Serushina, where he shut them up in ■ convent, where he severely beat and otherwise ill-used them, until they consented to pay money down for their release. Those who could not, ■ would not, ransom themselves were sent to prison, ■ to Serfitcheh and twenty to Lapsista, from which place he ■ accustomed to bring regular troops to ■ the inhabitants when maltreating them. Fetih used openly to boast that with his ■ hand he had killed 318 at Batak during the massacres. At Shatista we ■ dozens of victims of this monster, amongst others, the wife of ■ young ■ called Despos, whom Fetih had coveted. He first tried to procure her through ■ old woman, and then himself told her that he would keep her husband in prison until she yielded. Despos, however, sent her a message from his cell never to give in, and she replied that Fetih might ■ kill him, but she would still resist. On receipt of this answer, the Mudir cruelly beat Despos, and sent again. Thrice was the same dauntless reply returned, followed each time by merciless punishment on the man, the last time at Serushina, from whence he was brought in an almost senseless condition to Shatista, to the market-place, under an escort of soldiers, who surrounded ■ clear space to keep off the inhabitants, especially the incensed women, whilst yet ■ fourth cudgelling ■ inflicted. When the miserable Despos ■ inanimate to the ground, the Mudir, protected by the cordon of military with fixed bayonets, beat him on the head with a heavy stone, and when he moved, did so again, finally leaving him for dead. The cordon then broke up, and Fetih, with Ghikas at his side, strode back through the streets, revolver in hand, asking the crowd what they were loafing about for, and "Was it worth while to pay attention to one Christian dog the more ■ the less?" When night fell, and not before, a friend picked up the body of Despos, who ■ tended for fourteen days before he recovered speech. He ■ ■ length smuggled secretly away, disfigured and ■ cripple for life. The complaints of the Bishop and the reports of the Consular body failed to secure any ■

pensation for the ■ or woman, or punishment for the offender. This story may ■ incredible, but both Mr. Shipley and myself had it from the wife, from the friend who had saved Despos, and from ■ score of eye-witnesses whose narratives agreed in all the particulars given above. I had in my notebook the names of several others whom ■ saw who had been tortured in a similar ■ by Fetih and Ghikas, together with those of ■ and children who had been killed outright. Yet the only result of all these misdeeds was the removal of Fetih to Venzes, where he was inaugurating another reign of terror.

Other atrocities of every description were perpetrated on pretext of discovering brigands by the Vali Faik Pasha and his subordinates, notably ■ certain Mehemet, and two Albanians, Shehab ed Deen and his one-armed son, Hassan Abdullah. This latter murdered ■ Christian named Cro-teff in cold blood in ■ dispute over some ground. An Exarchist schoolmaster, Toja by name, ■ to avenge his countryman, and the result ■ a series of tortures. The avengers at last shut themselves up in a village called Smirnievo, whence one of them fired at ■ soldier. They ■ then all either killed or made prisoners, Mehemet, commanding the troops, reserving to himself the right of cutting off the heads of the latter with his ■ sword.

We also ■ several unfortunates who had suffered ■ follows for pretended connection with brigands and acts of brigandage, where the real culprits ■ perfectly well known. There ■ Nikka Romeh, who had splinters of pine driven under his nails and then set alight. His fingers were still in a horrible condition. Then Jovan Chanko, an old man of seventy, who had had heated stones placed under his armpits, and the flesh burnt away down to the ribs. Georgi Tanasso had been treated in the ■ way. Also Rista Giuro. An ■ had been prepared for roasting Mitza Jovan alive, but he managed to escape. Pope Tassa had almost all his beard dragged out by the roots. Jovan Vultcha and others, including several women, ■ terribly beaten, and thirteen ■

sent ■ Florina prison. All these were natives of Gornitchevo. The whole administration of Faik Pasha was ■ of corruption and abuse, and he had commenced long before he attained the position of Vali. During the Bulgarian insurrection all merchants who ■ interested in that country ■ forthwith imprisoned, and in spite of hundreds of petitions, signed largely by their Turkish townsmen, attesting their honorability, they only succeeded in obtaining their liberty by a lump payment of £3000. Ereira, the Wekil of Alatina, himself ■ Greek, ■ one of the most active in this infamous extortion of blackmail. At the Church of Istib, where Faik Pasha was then Mutessarif, plates ■ held at the door unblushingly for "money presents for the Mutessarif." At the time of my visit a mosque ■ being built by the Vali, which some called Faik Pasha Djamissy, and others Kassim Agha Djamissy. The reason of this was that the son of Kassim Agha had committed a deliberate murder near Uskub, but had been allowed to go free upon his father's paying £550 to Faik Pasha, which sum was utilised for the construction of a mosque to bear his name!

These facts give a picture of what was happening in certainly one of the best of the Turkish vilayets. As I have said in Chapter VIII., much of the blame rests with the Christian population itself, but monsters of iniquity like Fetih, butchers like Mehemet, and cupid Valis like Faik Pasha, ■ not rare enough, unhappily, to be considered exceptions, though neither ■ they ■ common ■ to prove the rule.

CHAPTER IX

AT the beginning of 1890 I was still at Belgrade, when rumours reached us that disaffection in Bulgaria had broken out in the shape of a very serious plot, headed by the Macedonian Major Panitza, and implicating a large number of army officers. This offered a good opportunity of leaving Serbia, which ■■■ by no means ■ desirable ■ pleasant residence, and making the acquaintance of a new country and people, and after a hurried good-bye to friends, I turned my back with considerable satisfaction on the White Fortress. On the 9th February I arrived at Sofia, which was far then from being the flourishing little city it has since become. The whole approach from the station gave one the impression of driving through ruins, the fact being that the process of rebuilding ■■■ beginning in earnest. To rebuild it ■■■ necessary to demolish, and entire quarters were pulled down wholesale. If the inhabitants objected to evacuate their tenements, ■ squad of sappers simply tore the roofs off from over their heads. As the weather ■■■ severe, this rough-and-ready system succeeded admirably.

One of my first visits ■■■ to the Palace, where I was received by Count Foras, an amiable old French courtier, who did all he could to drill the Bulgarian Court into something like European order—a task by no means easy. The only information he vouchsafed to me was that his august master, Prince Ferdinand, seldom took off his uniform before three in the morning, up to which hour he was hard at work ■ the affairs of State. From the Palace to the Skating Rink was only ten minutes' walk. This enclosure ■■■ at that time ■ very popular institution, whither all the rank and fashion of Sofia ■■■ went to resort on winter afternoons. It ■■■ merely ■ piece of low-lying

meadow, which could be flooded very easily so as to ■■■ the ice day by day, and it ■■■ lent to the public by M. Stamboloff, to whom the ground belonged.

Dinner at the Union Club completed ■■ introduction to almost everybody worth knowing in the capital, and before I had been forty-eight hours in the town I ■■■ free of Sofia.

In another place¹ I have told the story of the Panitza plot and of the many stirring events which succeeded its *dénouement*, but it will still be interesting, more so than any personal gossip, if I reproduce here several conversations I held with M. Stamboloff (as he always spelt and signed his ■■■ name), and which I was unable ■■ reproduce in the earlier work, the notes being in England at the time of writing it.

The first of these took place ■■ the 1st of March. These are Stamboloff's words, or ■■ nearly as possible ■■ literal translation of his vigorous phraseology. He invariably spoke to ■■ in French, occasionally interlarding with scraps of Russian, but his letters to myself ■■■ always written in the latter language, as his knowledge of ■■ former ■■■ colloquial rather than grammatical.

"The story of our trying to hide the participation of Russia in the Panitza plot is absurd. I do not know what more we could do to show our contempt of Russia, and ■■ resolve not to submit to her bullying, than ■■ ■■ doing. We ■■ but a little State, but ■■ long ■■ we subsist independently ■■ form an impenetrable barrier to the Russian advance. My own idea was, long before I ■■■ to power, and will be to the end, though I may ■■■ see its realisation, a Confederation of the Balkan States. Singly they must inevitably fall, and when they are out of the way Russia can do what she likes with Constantinople. And just ■■ it ■■■ to ■■ that ■■ ■■ necessary to Constantinople, ■■ is she necessary to ■■ Any other Power in Stamboul—Russia, England, ■■ Germany—would mean the end of the Balkan nationalities. Therefore ■■ ■■ anxious to keep up the bond with

¹ *Life of Stamboloff.*

Turkey, if she will only shake off her hesitation and her lethargy for once, and help ■■■ We want no material help, but merely the moral support of her recognition of ■■■ *status*. It has cost us enough to arrive ■■■ what we are, and it has cost Turkey nothing. I ■■■ urged to declare the Independence at once, and I may tell you that ■■■ have appealed to the Porte lately—within the last fortnight—to recognise the Prince. We have received ■■■ answer, and I don't suppose ■■■ shall get ■■■ It is the eternal shilly-shally of Stamboul which ruins ■■■ and them. If, however, the Porte refuses, I do not say that ■■■ shall not be forced to declare ourselves free. How would I do it? Not openly and brutally at once, but merely by omitting to pay the tribute. This would open the door to official explanations, and we could, and should say that if the parent threw off its child, the child would decline any longer to recognise the parent. I do not know what the result might be at first, but I am ■■■ that all Bulgaria would be with us. The present situation ■■■ so intolerable that it cannot last. Leaving the Government ■■■ out of the question, the strain upon the Prince is prodigious. It is not fair for him to run all the risks and bear all the burdens of Prince of Bulgaria without being recognised ■■■ such. And why, in Heaven's name! should not the Powers agree? It is merely the timidity of Turkey and the rage of Russia which frightens them—both of these hypocritically backing themselves up by quoting the Berlin Treaty. It has been infringed often enough for us not to feel any very delicate scruples ■■■ to the letter of it! The spirit of the infraction, ■■■ far as Bulgaria is concerned, has been recognised years ago. The fact is that Russia has been mistaken about Bulgaria all through. Her first idea was to get hold of Servia, but, failing there, she hoped to find a tool in ■■■ new State which she created for no other purpose, quite forgetting that, when ■■■ endowed with political shape and form and substantial power, Bulgaria possessed brains to see that salvation lay, not with Russia, but rather with Turkey. Russia has never yet reconciled herself to the unpalatable truth, and still

with maddest obstinacy continues her endeavours to gag and blindfold us, and all Europe too, into creating out of Bulgaria ■ advanced post for her armies.

"When we rebel, ■ have the Treaty of Berlin thrown in ■ teeth—a treaty which Russia herself was the first to break, and is breaking every day. She still hopes to bring in her candidate" (Prince Leuchtenburg) "by assassination and bribes; but if it ever comes to an issue, there will always be more Bulgarians in favour of ■ free Bulgaria than of ■ Russian province.

"We ■ being freely blamed for not hurrying on the Panitza trial. But why should we put ourselves out to enlighten the public through newspapers which publish utter rubbish by the column every morning? Our clean truth might be considered on a level with the rest of the flights of fancy of their correspondents and editors. All the Cabinets whom it most concerns have had copies of the evidence in our possession, with the names of the Russians implicated, even to that of Domontovitch, the General appointed at St. Petersburg to assume dictatorship if Panitza's plot had succeeded. A good choice, too! The Head of the Chancery of Prince Dondukoff Korsakoff, and ex-Russian Governor of the Tirnova district! We know him pretty well in Bulgaria!"

Then in reply to some question about previous events—"We had great difficulties in the past; during the Regency and before the election of Prince Ferdinand. All the foreign Diplomatic Agents tried to dissuade ■ from the step. But my standpoint was that ■ Regency by its very nature and essence represented a temporary and provisional rule, and it was not under a Regency that Bulgaria could ever be free. It might progress tranquilly enough for ■ certain number of years, again to fall back entirely under the domination of Turkey or Russia. No! it ■ necessary for ■ to have ■ Prince with ■ prospect of a dynasty, and it was very difficult to find one. At first ■ wanted King Charles of Roumania, but he refused. We would ■ have taken King Milan—not then knowing the true character of the ■ Of course, after the

Servian War, it impossible to put the king of the vanquished over who had been victorious. And it very good thing, after all, that we saved from him.

"Russia's aim now is to amalgamate Montenegro and Servia, but she will not find it an easy task with Bosnia and Herzegovina between, with Macedonia and Greece on the other side. And even if she succeeded in forming a coalition, with either Greece or Montenegro the head, do you think that the new State or States would remain any more obedient to Russian commands than have been? It is ridiculous to suppose such a thing.

"The true Russian policy has always been, is, and will be, to disintegrate. Any combination strong enough to feel its way would never stand Russian dictation. It is such coalition which I myself should like to see, but at present it appears only in a distant future."

Before quoting any more of Stamboloff's speeches, it may be worth while to interpolate the views of able Minister, Sir N. Roderick O'Connor, expressed to me within a day two of my arrival.

"If Bulgaria to declare her independence, the Powers would be extremely angry. After all, nobody cares very much for Bulgaria; and Germany in particular, who has to keep watch Russia and France, would possibly be roused to sufficient extent to go out of her way to punish the Principality. She would say, 'Confound the Bulgars! what do they mean by disturbing the peace of their big neighbours?' and if Russia pressed the Porte to the utmost, as she probably would, Germany could hardly be expected to interfere. It is of course possible that, as in the case of Eastern Roumelia, the Powers, who were very annoyed then, but taken by surprise, might at the last moment intercede in favour of the maintenance of the peace, but it would be rather difficult for them to do so. The Treaty of Berlin??? Of Russia has broken it, but Russia and Bulgaria are different quantities! It would be hard for the other Powers to restrain the Porte, or to argue against the tremendous pressure Russia would be sure to put It *might* be

done, but there would be such a violent vexation against Bulgaria for having provoked an acute crisis, that nobody would interfere purely for Bulgaria's sake. They might for their own, if there was a fair chance of staving off the evil hour. Of course it would be better if the Porte agreed to the recognition of the Prince; but the Porte never either agrees to or dissents from anything in a hurry.

"As for the views of Stamboloff, I think, perhaps, they are purposely exaggerated to you that you may play his game against Holy Russia. It is all very well for him to assert that the position is too strained to last, and quite untenable; but it is just as bad, if not worse, six and nine months ago. Then they said that they did not want a farthing for the very recognition of the Prince for which they are now clamouring. Six months hence they will probably again declare that it is of no consequence, and they will do without it. It is unpleasant, of course, for Prince Ferdinand, but it is so to-day than it was before. I do not believe that they will do anything just yet. It is practically inevitable that the Prince will be recognised, or the independence proclaimed some fine day, if they manage to avoid succumbing to Russia first. But things have to go much further before it comes to the point, and the situation does not seem to me so bad as Stamboloff sometimes, but not always, makes out. I am convinced he is quite easy in his own mind about it."

The next talk with Stamboloff of which the notes are by me, took place on the 4th of March, although it is seldom that a day passed without my seeing him. The subject again was the question of Bulgaria's declaring her independence, and his remarks have not lost all interest yet, since though Prince Ferdinand has now secured his recognition, and his Prime Minister is styled Stoiloff Effendi in the Turkish official press, there is still a great wish and determination amongst the Bulgarians to be free. The difference, however, which was clearly foreseen by Stamboloff, is that they will probably find that they have to face Russia, and not Turkey, when the moment comes. Indeed, in devoting this chapter

almost entirely to a page of past history, my excuse must be that, ■ far ■ Bulgaria is concerned, the situation has not changed very appreciably, and where it has done so, many of the observations reproduced are still pertinent.

■ *March 4th*.—When Vulkovitch handed my letter" (requesting the recognition of Prince Ferdinand) "to the Grand Vizier, he was probably rather disturbed, and communicated it to the Ambassadors. That is how it reached Berlin. Up to now, Turkey has taken no notice of the request. But I repeat that if the Porte refuses to recognise the Prince, we will declare our independence. It promised three years ago to recognise the Prince whom we should elect, and it has never done so. I do not fear the consequences of declaring independence ■ much ■ those of inaction. If the Sultan himself were to write to me three hundred times, threatening to declare war, I should not believe him. For what would he gain? At the very utmost a re-establishment of the *status quo* of the Treaty of Berlin, *i.e.* a discontented Eastern Roumelia once more, which inevitably would sooner or later again unite with a Bulgaria which would never consent to remain crystallised in its original form. It would re-enter into the forced payment of its tribute of three millions, which it could encash much ■■■■ easily and regularly by recognising the Prince, and which, furthermore, are of ■ personal ■ to the Sultan, as they go straight into the pockets of foreign bondholders. Putting the recognition of the Prince aside, and the ■■■■ of our having thrown off the suzerainty, would it be worth while for Turkey to make ■■■■ for the sake nominally of its annual three millions, and with the real result of advancing Russia ■ within less than a hundred kilometres of Constantinople? And would the other Powers quietly allow her to set the match to the trains of gunpowder which ■■■■ lying about, for such an object? I will allow, if you like, that the other Powers will be incensed, and leave us to fight it out with Turkey. We should struggle to the bitter end if ■ ■■■■ to an invasion, and if ■■■■ were beaten we should not be much worse off than before. I ■■■■

that ■ should be in just the predicament which ■ should have fought to avoid, namely, ■ Russian occupation, for that would surely follow if the Turks attacked us on the advice of Russia. *Ceteris paribus*, Bulgaria will prefer the risk of war to that of ■ Russian occupation, the ■ so ■ the risk of the occupation is coming within measurable distance, and I am not at all sure that ■ proclamation of independence would be ■ certain war, at least not with Turkey. With Serbia, yes, more probably. I am, in fact, tolerably sure that as ■ we proclaimed ■ should be invaded by Serbia, urged ■ by Russia, unless—and it is ■ large *unless*—Austria threatened Belgrade. You can understand that Austria could hardly look on with indifference ■ Russian-Serbia conquering Bulgaria. As for such a war, if we were left alone to our two selves, it would be a mere promenade for our army, and an announcement of it would be greeted with the utmost enthusiasm by the whole nation, Russophiles, Panslavists, and all. Nothing would delight them ■ than a call to continue the story of Slivnitza and Pirots.

"I believe that Passitch" (then ■ mere agitator—afterwards Prime Minister in Serbia) "is now arranging for some such eventuality at St. Petersburg. But we ■ well informed, and are keeping our eyes and ears open. We shall not make ■ decisive ■ without being well prepared, especially with ■ army. As for Passitch, I despise the ■. He ■ here in the ■ without any official character, not being then even what he ■ is, President of the Skuptschina, and he proposed to me to act with Serbia and divide Macedonia between us. I replied that before dividing other countries ■ had to consolidate our own: that at present neither did Serbia belong to the Serbs, nor Bulgaria to the Bulgars, with any certainty. He stared open-mouthed at this. ■ went on to say that it might be well enough to make little raids into Macedonia, but simultaneously Russia might be ■ Varna, and Austria ■ Belgrade, and that for the present, instead of tearing each other's crests like ■ pair of

fighting-cocks for the amusement of the Great Powers, ■ making filibustering expeditions, ■ had better look ■ home. For the rest, I added, I ■ Minister and he ■ nobody, and I ■ decline further to discuss the field of general politics. He then asked what message he was to take back to Gruitch" (Servian Premier) "in ■ to his proposal, and I replied, 'Give him my best wishes and advice above all things to keep quiet for ■ while.' The Passitch sort of unaccredited agent is ■ very dangerous tool for anybody to work ■ play with. I remember when Kaulbars ■ here that ■ message came to me that I ■ to receive Bogdanoff, and arrange with him for the future. I replied that not only would I refuse to treat with him, but I should decline to have any intercourse whatever with such a vagabond; and I gave orders that he should not be allowed inside the doors of the telegraph office, where I ■ almost living at that time. The quantity and quality of the messages I then received was extraordinary. I have kept most of them—more than five thousand—by me, and hope some day to write from the story of those days. I had hoped to have a month's holiday this February, but, you see, the Panitza business has upset everything. You must understand that if we now threaten to declare our independence, it is not for the Prince, nor the Government, nor the people: it is ■ account of the army. We know that there ■ two or three hundred discontented officers who ■ always ready to be tools of Russia, to become so, I mean—not trustworthy. They have learned all they know in Russian schools, and have Russian leanings, sympathies, and modes of thought. If ■ can hold ■ until the new set who ■ studying in France and Belgium, and elsewhere, ■ fit to ■ in, the danger will be lessened. But I ■ afraid. It is ■ shame that officers forget their oaths, their fealty, and their patriotism; but they do, and it is useless to ignore it. Prince Alexander fell through shutting his eyes to the possibility of treason. Two months before his abdication he told ■ that he feared revolt amongst the populations of Roumelia. ■

answered that there ■ no fear from the people, but that it ■ the army which threatened. He ■ furious, and kept repeating that 'his children,' always his children, 'could never be untrue!' Afterwards when ■ was driving in his carriage ■ his last journey out of Bulgaria I reminded him of what we had said. 'Ah, yes!' he sighed, 'you ■ right: but ■ should never have believed it possible.'

"I well remember the day of the battle of Slivnitsa. It ■ glorious weather, sunshine like to-day. I ■ into Sofia with Major von Hühn, and ■ drew near we could hear the cannon so plainly that ■ thought the Serbs must have found some other way round. It must have been some peculiar echo from the Vitosh which I had never heard before or since. I drove back to the field almost immediately, but Tsanoff" (then Minister for Foreign Affairs) "went to the Russian Agency and asked what ■ to be done. He thought, as everybody did, that the Servian army was marching on Sofia. Koyander shrugged his shoulders and said, 'I will undertake to stop the Serbs at the very gates if the Ministry will sign the deposition of the Prince.' But Tsanoff went away in a rage. Soon after he received my telegram saying we were victorious along the whole line. He took it to the Russian Legation just ■ the whole party, including two ladies, were sitting down to tea. 'Congratulate us,' he cried; 'we have won the day!' 'Impossible! what a pity!' ■ the way the Russians received the news."¹

ANOTHER CONVERSATION ON APRIL 1st.

"The first thing ■ heard on my return from Philippopolis ■ that ■ letter from Zankoff to the Heads of

¹ Tsanoff himself confirmed the foregoing anecdote to ■. He further related how intense ■ the excitement ■ Sofia. ■ himself went to the telegraph office ■ climbed ■ tower, from which ■ smoke of the battle could be seen. But ■ message came. At length he told the chief clerk that unless ■ managed to give him news in ■ sense ■ another within half ■ hour he should ■ dismissed. ■ Stamboloff's wire.

Parties had been found amongst Kissimoff's papers. Kissimoff ■ the Chancellor of the Red Cross. We had long known that he was a pillar of the Zankoffists, and had had him watched. Lately we dismissed him. As he ■ leaving he took ■ bundle of papers out of his breast coat pocket, and one fell ■ the floor. His successor waited till Kissimoff had shut the door, and then picked it up. Afterwards when Kissimoff ■ back to look for it, he said he had seen nothing. The document ■ dated St. Petersburg, ——— 1889. The day and month ■ to be filled in on signature by the 'Heads.' I don't know which 'Heads' ■ meant exactly. We have plenty of Heads here. I am Head of the Liberals, and there is Karaveloff, Radoslávoff, Natchevitch, and others. The document was in the handwriting of Ludskánoff" (Zankoff's son-in-law), "which is very well known to every official here. It was already signed by Zankoff, who thus bound himself in advance. It contained a solemn pledge all to work together without distinction of party, firstly, for the expulsion of Prince Ferdinand; secondly, for the reconciliation with Russia. I myself have a letter from Zankoff in the same ■ written from Belgrade last November. I shall probably produce it with the rest at the trial, and indict Zankoff together with Panitzza, and judge him by default. It is curious how the old ■ Kissimoff could keep such a compromising letter when his ■ had been arrested only four or five days previously. I recollect when I ■ ■ exile in Roumania, there was a notorious bandit there too who had committed numberless murders. He always carried about with him in ■ back trouser pocket ■ poignard with which he had killed fourteen people. I asked him once what ■ his object in doing so, ■ some day it would ■ ■ evidence against him. He replied that it was of no further use to him, it was true, but that it brought him good luck. Just so Ozúnoff the other day had a heap of Russian correspondence neatly tied up and docketed. When interrogated ■ to how he could be such ■ fool, he answered that he had thought

perhaps when the Russians came here the papers might be useful as proving his previous zeal. It is remarkable how often pure accident ■■■■ us better than our most strenuous and intelligent efforts. People credit ■■■■ with having ■■■■ tremendous staff of secret police everywhere, ■■■■ which I spend large sums. It is very far from being the case, and almost all my information reaches ■■■■ casually, and ■■■■ to speak by accident.

"Ah! If I only had Zankoff here instead of Panitza! Panitza's confession is interesting in ■■■■ way, but I don't believe all of it, especially since he ■■■■ Kissoff, who revealed the plot. That may be true and may not; in any case, Kissoff having given evidence cannot be prosecuted; but I fancy it is merely ■■■■ piece of spite on the part of Panitza, and if so it taints his whole confession.

"A war with Servia would be very popular. When Milan ■■■■ to the throne he tried to make the Bulgarians and Servians friends, and we too did all ■■■■ could. Even now I and my party always try to tone down the bitterness of the enmity which ■■■■ exists, but it is no good; and there is no denying that the Bulgars are still very incensed against the Serbs. You know the saying 'There is no enemy like an old friend,' and that seems to be ■■■■ case. We have enough Krinka rifles and ammunition for two years' perpetual fighting. The rifles may not be as good ■■■■ the Servian, but we know that ■■■■ ■■■■ better. It is not the rifle so much as the man who pulls the trigger. If I ■■■■ to spend a hundred pounds on ■■■■ gun, and Count Starzensky" (Secretary of the Austrian Legation, and ■■■■ very fine shot) "were to buy ■■■■ for sixty francs, and we ■■■■ to go out together, I know which would kill farthest and oftenest."

I will only give ■■■■ ■■■■ extract from my notebook of conversations, dated 2nd June, when I found Stamboloff in ■■■■ state of great excitement after the sentences ■■■■ Panitza and his accomplices had been given. I went straight from the Court-House to the Premier, who burst out—

"I am furious at the result of the court-martial, simply furious! I myself went — all the papers and know the *dossier* pretty well by heart, better than any of the lawyers or members. If the men had done nothing I should not have sent them for trial. And then the Procureur coolly gets up and withdraws the charges against half of them! It is not his business to withdraw charges forsooth! He has an act of indictment given into his hands by the Ministers for him to press. He has no authority to withdraw the accusation his Minister has made. But I shall dismiss him from his post" (which he did). "As for the members of the Court, I had hoped that they would do their duty better. They have before them ■ pack of traitors who positively avow that they intended to betray their oath and dethrone their Prince, and the Court only finds the ringleader guilty for death, and adds a recommendation to mercy! Why, the whole five or six" (Panitza, Arnaoudoff, Kalubkoff, and the two Rizoffs were meant) "ought to have been condemned to death, and the rest to fifteen years! Fancy letting off men like Rizoff and Kissimoff! Thank you! A fig for being Premier in ■ country where you cannot reckon upon the army to — you faithfully! It is impossible to govern under such circumstances! Pooh! Petroff and Sontcheff" (members of the court-martial like the others next mentioned) "were not equal to the occasion, only Drandareffsky and Andréeff. As for Marinoff— '*figure de femme, et cœur de fille*!' He wept and drivelled and turned the others, talking about Panitza's services and wife and children! But I have services and a family too! Am I for that — to try and kill my superiors, to risk throwing my country into a civil war, or into the clutches of a Power like Russia; and then, when I am found out just in time to stop me, to get up and say that I think I — quite right, but that, if you want to punish me, you must remember my services and my wife? As for the acquitted, I shall expel them all at — from Bulgaria" (they — deported next morning). "It is bad enough to see them acquitted without leaving them

to propagate the opinions they expressed in Court. Of — if we wanted to find a *vice de forme* it would not be difficult. Do you think that a Court which could return such a ridiculous verdict could be capable of writing it out legally? Pah! But how do I know that another one would be better? I tell you my confidence is altogether shaken. The Court was left too much alone because — trusted them too much. I — went — them, nor saw — of them. But I believe Stransky" (Minister for Foreign Affairs), "who has a weakness for Panitza, influenced them considerably. Has he ever said anything to you about it? Well, I know he used to talk a good deal with the members, and Markoff" (the Procureur-Général), "through Vulnâroff, his brother-in-law, — in relations with the Panitza crew. They ought to have sentenced the lot to death, and left the Prince to decide. His Highness could then have commuted in the — of Kalubkoff, on the ground that he at least — working for his country" (he was a Russian), "and so — could have scored off Russia."

Since the assassination of Stamboloff, Bulgaria has gradually been drawn more and more within the meshes of the Russian net, which all his energies and efforts were directed to breaking. In order to secure his recognition, which Stamboloff would, if he had been left in power, have tried to obtain by the threat of proclaiming the independence, Prince Ferdinand baptized his son in the Orthodox faith, accepted Russian Ministers resident — at Sofia, brought back the officers who had kidnapped Alexander, and put himself virtually under Russian protection. At the — time he has — ceased his protestations of loyalty and devotion to the Sultan, though in all questions between Bulgaria and the Porte it is now solely upon Russian backing that the vassal State relies. Since, at the moment of writing, there seems a fair prospect of very radical changes before very long throughout the Turkish Empire, it would be idle to analyse the present position of Bulgaria in comparison with its past, or to weigh the chances of the future which the two different

policies pursued by Stamboloff and his [redacted] might have produced and may [redacted] result in.

Besides the commanding personality of Stamboloff himself, there were many other personages who had played ■ considerable rôle in the past history of Bulgaria, and whose acquaintance and conversation [redacted] both interesting and instructive.

M. Tsanoff has already been mentioned. He had been Minister for Foreign Affairs during several critical moments, but had then quite retired into private life. When I called upon him he [redacted] digging in the garden in his shirt sleeves in true Bulgarian simplicity. He told [redacted] that for several days before Servia declared [redacted] he had held long conversations by telegraph with Prince Alexander, and had repeatedly warned him to be prepared. The Prince always declared that it was ■ mere *blague*, and that his good friend Milan would never think of attacking him. It had invariably been the fault of Alexander of Battenberg's character that he placed too implicit confidence in those whom he believed to be his friends. Tsanoff stated that at the time of the Eastern Roumelian revolt Sir Frank Lascelles had been the truest friend of Bulgaria. To Alexander he had always behaved almost like ■ brother. He remarked that Stamboloff and Givkoff were the only two civilians who had received the *Croix de Bravoure*. It was really contrary to the Bulgarian Constitution for any Bulgarian to [redacted] orders, but the usage [redacted] creeping in.

Another gentleman with whom I often talked [redacted] M. Gueshof, Minister of Finance. He was ■ mild, rather nervous-mannered man, and did not approve of Stamboloff's arbitrary methods. "You might just as well proclaim martial law at once," he said, "as to exercise it, as it is virtually in force just now. Nothing like ■ public [redacted] even ■ private meeting is allowed, all newspaper discussion or comment unfavourable to the Government is suppressed, and private letters [redacted] regularly opened. For instance, there is the case of Yovtcheff, who published in the *Rodolubets* a species of acrostic verse, the initial

letters of each line spelling 'Stamboloff is ■ tyrant who extinguishes all liberty.' He ■ summoned to the third Uchastuk " (police station), "where ■ captain, called Kiroff, asked him who ■ the author of the acrostic, and how he dared to publish such a thing in his paper. He then hit him several blows in the face, and told him with ■ curse to sit down, whilst some conversation went on through the telephone. A friend of Yovtcheff's who happened to be in the Headquarter Office heard the question put through the machine, 'Has Yovtcheff any traces of the blows on his face?' 'No.' 'Then turn him out of the Uchastuk.' He also told me that when Basmadjieff, the Prefect of Police, had heard of how Stamboloff had gone himself to arrest Panitza at midnight in his bed, he had exclaimed, 'What ■ chance thrown away! Why on earth did not Madame Panitza, who had a revolver under her pillow, shoot him down ■ he broke into the ■ at that hour? She could never have been punished had she done so!'"

Karaveloff and Zankoff ■ others whom I met, the latter, however, not in Bulgaria until after the tragic end of his enemy.

Of Prince Ferdinand ■ very little. Probably on account of my intimacy, not only with Stamboloff, whom he had already begun to fear and dislike, though leaning entirely upon him, but with a great many others of all parties, many of whom were openly hostile to the Coburger, I ■ ■ *persona grata* ■ the Palace, ■ some of my colleagues. Of course I paid ■ official visit, and ■ received with cool and rather cynical courtesy in one of the smaller rooms of the Palace. One of the Prince's main hobbies ■ ornithology, and two white-headed eagles, stuffed, adorned either side of the mantelshef with a great horned owl between.¹ There were various other specimens about, besides ■ cage full of small birds,

¹ Later ■ I myself possessed one of these fine birds, who, however, grew ■ ferocious that I presented him to the Prince for his zoological gardens. At that time I believe it ■ the second specimen, but ■ progeny has ■ sprung up from the original pair, as anybody can ■ by a visit to the large cage full of them.

something like Cirl Buntings, but which His Highness said were grand songsters. There were also some meagre little bob-tailed parrots, which were rather ■ of pride from having been bred in his own aviary ■ Coburg, from whence he had also imported some good *dachshunds*.

Prince Ferdinand is altogether a Bourbon in appearance, having inherited their type through his mother, the Princess Clementine. He has ■ tall commanding figure, but is not graceful in his movements on foot, and sits a horse execrably. His voice is harsh and disagreeable, but he is witty in conversation and can make himself agreeable enough when he chooses. Though he has been at pains to learn Bulgarian, which he speaks well, he has never amalgamated in any way with his people of adoption, and the Bulgarians in his Court are expected to conform entirely to his ideas. The Court is consequently not at all a Bulgarian one, but ■ species of hybrid Franco-German establishment. Even ■ my first visit, as the subject happened to crop up of the Serbs trying to suborn Bulgarian emigrants, he remarked with an acid smile, "Ah, oui, ■ *fidèles sujets*!" As, however, he has ■ troubled himself much to disguise his dislike, not to say contempt, for the people from whom he accepted his crown, he can scarcely grumble at their want of devotion to his person. In passing from Roumania one cannot fail to be struck with the difference in the Palaces. The Bucharest Court is just ■ national ■ if King Charles had been born there, and the villegiatura at Sinaia brings the royal family into daily and almost familiar contact with the public. But both at Sofia and Alexandrovo the Bulgarian Court is like a little oasis—a minute, reserved enclosure from which all trespassers are rigorously excluded.

Besides his taste for birds, Prince Ferdinand affected a certain love for sport; but this was, I fancy, ■ put ■ than genuine. I have mentioned Count Starzensky already as ■ of the best sportsmen ■ have ever met. This gentleman ■ convinced that there must be capercaillie in Bulgaria, and would not rest until he had discovered some of their resorts at Samakov and Petrokhan.

His find created a certain sensation, and the sport of stalking these birds in the early spring is a very fashionable one, the Prince occasionally went with the Count on these excursions. He also gave a drive for chamois on the Rilo Mountain, where the existence of this game was likewise revealed by Starzensky; but I believe the result of the drive was that all the chamois avoided the guns and charged helter-skelter through a *posse* of valets and footmen who were taking their ease a mile or two off. As a matter of fact, Bulgaria is full of game in parts, and any really sporting Prince might easily have rented or purchased some fine shootings. The only attempt, however, made in this direction was the issue of an order that the pheasants at Yamboli were reserved for the royal guns. As, in the first place, the land did not belong to the Prince; and secondly, it was very systematically poached by the villagers, to whom it really did appertain, I myself went thither with the intention of bagging a few. Orders were at once sent to stop me, but I was inclined to disregard them and see what the result could have been had I not been dissuaded by a personal appeal from some friends who did not wish to have such a question raised. I daresay that this incident also did not contribute towards advancing me in Palace favour. At the same time I had very little need for this boon in order to enjoy life capitally even in those troublous times.

One of the pleasantest trips we made was a picnic out to the Monastery of Rilo, which lies off of the spurs of the Rhodope, and is a regular stock attraction for visitors who have sufficient time at their disposal. Our party consisted of Sir N. R. O'Connor, with his wife, Baron and Baroness Wangenheim, the German Representative; M. Kaufmann, the real, though uncrowned, Prince of Sofia; Count Starzensky, and myself. We rode out by way of Samakov, where we passed the night, and reached the monastery the following afternoon.

A thousand years ago a boy of fourteen left his native village of Skrino and set out in search of a convenient

place wherein to practise the strict asceticism necessary for the salvation of the elect. After wandering ■ many ■ mountain, forest, and plain, he discovered ■ hollow tree on the slopes of Mount Rilo, and later ■ ■ hollow rock, where he established himself like ■ coney. Gradually the fame of the hermit spread abroad, and emulous disciples joined him, till they formed a little colony, and began building huts for themselves and ■ rude chapel for their worship. The youth ■ Svetl Jovan Rilski, and the chapel ■ the predecessor of the great Monastery of Rilo, which occupies the same position in Bulgaria ■ Mont St. Michel in Normandy, or La Grande Chartreuse in Dauphiné.

The Rilo range rises almost in the centre of the Balkan Peninsula, half-way between the Danube and the Ægean. It is shaped like a monster pyramid of nature, measuring from east to ■ fifty kilometres, and thirty from north to south. The northern face is abrupt and steep, and clothed with glorious virgin forests, where the sound of the axe will never be heard, for transport is impossible. Eastwards the Rila joins the Rhodope, and to the south the Perin Planina. Its topmost peak is 2930 metres above the sea, only a few feet lower than Olympus. The fauna and flora and the geological formation remind one of the Carpathians; and, like them, the Rila is dotted with small lakes, which the peasants call "eyes of the sea." The forests reach up six thousand feet, and, above them, bare crags are the home of the chamois. The monastery lies high on the mountain slope, and in the gorge below foams the Rilska Réka, ■ delicious crystal stream, whose trout furnish the staple food of the monks, and whose icy water is sweeter than wine. It has the appearance, from the outside, of ■ baronial fortress, with crenelated walls and loopholes, and massive iron gates, which ■ closed half ■ hour after sunset, to open only ■ next dawn. The moment the threshold is crossed, however, ■ is face to face with the Church of Our Lady, almost a counterpart of that of the Monastery of Khilandâr ■ Mount Athos, with ■ red

and white stone façade and six silvered cupolas. It stands in the centre of an immense court, round which is built the monastery proper, three storeys high. Seventy-six massive stone pillars support the balconies of the guest chambers, and also of the monks, three hundred in number. Some of these ■■■■ are very spacious, and fairly well furnished with carpets, divans, and cushions. A niche contains water and ■ basin and ewer, and wardrobes, *à la Turque*, are let into the walls. Each of the larger rooms could easily accommodate half ■ dozen persons, and it would not be difficult to billet ■ whole regiment in the vast building. The walls of the church ■■■ entirely covered with frescoes representing various Bible scenes—the Day of Judgment, Lazarus and Dives, and the punishments reserved for each particular kind of sin. These, ■ well as the interior paintings, are solely the work of Macedonian and Bulgarian artists, whose special forte is the delineation of devils. The variety of form and expression to be found in these mural decorations is delightful, and the face of the principal fiend, in ■■■ of these frescoes, when ■ soul escapes him, is a perfect study in demonology. This particular painting is curious in the extreme. In the centre is a huge pair of scales, before which stands, with folded hands, the soul. On one side is the heavenly host, armed with long celspears, and ■■■ the other the devils. The sins resemble rolls of tobacco, and ■■■ piled ■■■ to the balance by an assiduous horned demon. The scale, however, refuses to turn, and the soul is saved, several angels keeping off devils laden with sins at the point of the pitchfork. Inside there is not ■ square inch uncovered with decoration, and the Iconostasis is ■ blaze of gold, enamel, and precious stones. To the right lies the body of St. Jovan, which is reverently uncovered before visitors. It is enveloped in rich broideries and silver plates, only ■ mummied hand showing for the kiss of the faithful, and ■ the feet is placed ■ dish to receive their offerings. In ■ vault at the south-west corner of the cloisters is the library and chamber of relics. Neither

of these, however, ■ up to expectations, the library being especially poor. The most interesting document by far is the Firman given by the last King of the Bulgars, "*the faithful servant of God, Jovan Shishman, King and Autocrat of all the Bulgars and Greeks.*" It is nearly two yards long, written on parchment in Bulgarian, and signed with ■ large gold seal the size of ■ crown piece. It is dated 1379, and confirms all donations made by his predecessors, with ■ minute description of the properties and rights of the monastery. There ■ one or two fine old manuscript Bibles in Cyrillian characters, massively bound in heavy silver covers of excellent workmanship, with the names of the artists and inscriptions inserted in the general design. One of these states that it ■ completed "in the year 7033 of the Creation," and by a rapid calculation the Abbot interprets this to make it three hundred and sixty-five years old. The key to this chronology is in fixing the birth of Christ ■ 5508 of the Creation, and it appears to be generally used in Slovene manuscripts. Another Bible bears on one cover the following:—"Remember in your holy prayers brother *Mathéa, the goldsmith of Sofia, who laboured to carve this Gospel together with the monk Euthymia, and helped by the first monk Kallista in the year 1577.*" There are crucifixes of every imaginable shape and material, and ■ a reliquary an embossed silver casket with the bones of seven saints. In the Abbot's room is the crucifix presented by Prince Alexander of Battenberg, a very beautiful specimen of Russian handicraft, set round with large amethysts, and a larger one, given last year by Prince Ferdinand. The Abbot, or Hegumen, ■ a jovial gentleman of forty-five, who looked ten years younger, and did the honours of coffee, cigarettes, and *raki* with genial good-humour. He is appointed by ballot for three years, and Father Joseph seemed likely to have ■ second tenure of office, ■ popular had he made himself. There are two visitors' books—one for simple inscription, and the other for noting the donations made by the parting guests. Owing to stories spread of brigandage, only one

party had been to Rilo since the summer before; but, ■ a matter of fact, there is very little to fear. In August the great Festival of St. Jovan is held, and pilgrims flock from every corner of the peninsula to the monastery in their thousands. This temporary excitement, however, only lasts a few days, and the Rilo soon returns to its normal state of isolated tranquillity. The hospitality of the monastery is of a primitive kind, and the fare provided somewhat monotonous, so that it is as well to take provisions both of meat and wine. The monks are not supposed to touch meat within the walls, nor outside them, on Wednesdays and Fridays. On these fast days nothing prepared with milk ■ butter ■ is allowed, and trout, with lentil soup and bread, forms the perpetual *menu*. The kitchen is ■ dark and cavernous den, and the fire is made by lighting the trunk of ■ fir-tree, which burns up fiercely under the pots, and is pushed forward by degrees as it ■ away. Most of the brethren cook for themselves, but two *chefs* are ■ duty for serving travellers, assisted by ■ few small boys to wait. Altogether there are thirty children at school, with three teachers. They are obliged in every way to conform to the usual monastic discipline, and to attend all the chapel services. The daily service in the large church takes place at two in the morning, and the monks ■ roused from their slumbers by the sound of ■ wooden gong,—a plank suspended by two cords,—which rings weirdly through the night. Close to the church rises an old dilapidated tower, on to which a belfry has been built about half-way up. The tower has the following inscription:—“*Under the rule of the all-powerful Prince Stefan Dushan Chrylé built the Tower with much labour to the glory of St. Jovan and the holy Virgin. 1335.*” The belfry is dated 1844, and was a gift of the Servian Prince Milosh. Throughout the monastery the national stamp is everywhere evident, in contradistinction to the Greek spirit which pervades so many of these establishments. Rilo ■ essentially Bulgarian, and a fitting monument of the tenacity of the race.

One of the ■■■ for Starzensky's and my ■■■ participation in this excursion was the hope of being able to find chamois. No ■■■ had we arrived than we sent for everybody who ■■■ reputed to know anything about hunting, and received enough information to warrant ■■■ belief that there most certainly ■■■ goats of ■■■ species amongst the summits. Accordingly ■■■ agreed to start in pursuit of them, and persuaded two young peasants to accompany us. We had not ascended very far, however, when ■■■ violent storm burst, and continued with such violence and pertinacity that ■■■ elected to return. It ■■■ in July, and ■■■ had scarcely bargained for anything of the sort. Personally, I ■■■ not fond of climbing, and only undertake an ascent under strong inducements, and when I can do so more or less under favourable conditions. Starzensky, who was very keen after his chamois, ■■■ the contrary, decided to go on, and so we parted.

Next morning the whole of the mountain was hidden in mist and rain whilst it was warm and bright below, and about eleven the boy came down asking for some cigarettes and a box of sardines to be sent up to the Count. It appeared that the storm had increased all the afternoon with blinding snow and hail, till the pair of hunters were brought up on a narrow ledge afraid either to go on or go back. It ■■■ impossible also to make a fire, and they spent most of the night standing with their backs against the rock.

Next, ■■■ the third, afternoon the boy came down again, saying that Starzensky was following with the chamois, which he had finally succeeded in spying, stalking, bowling over, and bringing in ■■■ his back. It was certainly ■■■ well-earned pair of horns, which ■■■ did not grudge my ■■■ energetic fellow-sportsman.

Meanwhile I had been amusing myself with the trout. Having no implements, I fashioned ■■■ hook out of ■■■ hair-pin lent by ■■■ of the ladies, and hard work it ■■■ to reduce it to the requisite fineness. Even after all it had ■■■ barb. Some shredded ■■■ ■■■ well enough to tie it ■■■ to some hairs from the tail of my nag. My first essays were, however, far from successful, and I began to think

the jovial abbot, Father Joseph, had been making fun of ■ when he had said I might easily catch a couple of ■. He too had a good laugh at my empty, ■ nearly empty, creel, but said that he would himself accompany me ■ the morrow and teach me how to fish. The idea of being given ■ lesson in trout-fishing by ■ Bulgarian priest rather tickled my fancy, but the Padre ■ as good as his word.

In the morning after matins the worthy man tucked up his skirts conveniently in his girdle and invited ■ to start. On reaching ■ large meadow he began catching grasshoppers of a peculiar kind, small and green, of which he accumulated ■ store, and then commenced operations, working all the time down stream. Hardly had he made his cast, if cast it could be called, before he deposited his first trout ten yards behind him on the turf. There was no playing them with an unbarbed hook and a hazel rod only about eight feet long cut out of the thicket. After he had secured about a dozen he trotted back to the monastery. When I appeared later with five dozen more the rest of the party would not believe that they had been fairly caught, Kaufmann being especially sceptical. In the evening I had another turn, and as they were rising like sharks I was almost certain of one behind every stone. M. Kaufmann seeing me in the distance strolled up with a chaffing remark, to which I replied that I would ■ three stones from each of which I would then and there produce a fish in as many minutes. A bet ■ made, which was never difficult with my unbeliever, whose astonishment ■ perfectly ludicrous ■ he ■ the trout flying over his head one after another. I met him a few months ago, and ■ had another laugh ■ the scene, which he ■ he will never forget to the day of his death.

I cannot leave Bulgaria without noticing another short and enjoyable excursion, in company this time with my colleague of the *Times*, Mr. J. Bouchier. It came about in this wise. One afternoon whilst taking ■ constitutional ■ the Orkhanieh road I met a peasant driving a cart which contained a stag ■ ■ couple of capercaillie.

Inquiring whence he came, and whether there was much more of such game in his neighbourhood, he named the village of Keuprishtitza, and declared that stag, boar, and roedeer abounded. He also said that he did not mind taking me there if I chose to run the risk of being captured by brigands. This part of the question was settled by Stamboloff giving me a letter to one of the brigand chiefs, and further recommending me, through the peasant Rashko, to the headman of the place, and holding him responsible. Bouchier, though not a very enthusiastic sportsman, was taken with the idea of exploring a piece of the country not much known, and we started in a "paetone," as the Bulgarians call the victorias which ply for hire, with our belongings mostly slung behind on the springs. About one o'clock we reached Tashkesser, and baited at an inn called the "Doves," in spite of the rival attractions of another hostelry and its invitation written up in charcoal over the door, "This is a khan. Walk in, ladies and gentlemen." During the rest of the afternoon we rolled lazily on our way, reaching Pirdrop about eight in the evening. Here we bought a quarter of lamb, and this, together with spring onions, sardines, and snails, made a very fine dinner.

Profiting by many previous experiences, I made my sleeping arrangements by having a big mat spread in the very middle of the courtyard in the open, and then covering it a foot or so deep in sweet hay, could lie down without fear of those who murder sleep, but who in a room were rather defeated by loose straw and hay. They can, however, and do, surmount this difficulty generally by dropping accurately from the ceiling; but with the sky above I was safe. Bouchier preferred a lordly chamber, for that night only, the lesson being sufficient. Harnessing four steeds at eight next morning, we pushed on, and about eleven began a very steep climb up the D'Iboko Derch, half-way between Pirdrop and our destination. Near the top were two by Rashko's son and another youth, who presented us with a bouquet each of wild geranium, hyacinth, and other flowers. Finally we

reached Keuprishtitza soon after two o'clock, and being somewhat sore from the jolting, lay down for ■ siesta in the house of the headman. This old fellow had had a family of twelve, but only five girls and one boy were left at home. Two of these, maidens about sixteen, served us at table and assisted ■ at ■ ablutions, wanting to save ■ the trouble ■ of washing our own faces. On the walls hung four different kinds of rifles, plus an old single-barrelled Russian gun, several hunting-knives, and various trophies of the chase—horns, boars' tusks, etc. In the evening the most respectable of the village community paid ■ visits, amongst them being ■ doctor who had spent ■ time on service in Yemen, from whence he had brought an interesting collection of photographs of the Turkish garrisons and of the holy places. There was also another youth, who spoke Arabic and French well, like the doctor, a surprising circumstance in such an out-of-the-way spot.

After putting ourselves in communication with the brigand hunters through an ancient old scamp of ■ least eighty, we agreed to meet next morning outside the village, which some of their number declined to enter; and soon after eight we mounted two shaggy ponies, with a third to carry ■ belongings, and, escorted by a dozen wild-looking peasants all armed to the teeth, struck away up the face of the mountain, which ■ thickly wooded, with beautiful grass glades here and there. By ■ ■ ■ already high up, and made a first beat. As it was not the ■ for deer, ■ did not care ■ much to shoot any ■ to convince ourselves of their existence, and this ■ quickly manifest. The manner of the driving was primitive, but considering the smallness of ■ numbers it ■ very well done, and the game was generally sent well forward, though seldom within shot of either Bouchier ■ myself. In the second drive there were three chances missed ■ roedeer, and capercaillie ■ ■ Altogether ■ must have seen fourteen or fifteen stags and several roe and boar, but nothing was killed. We had a frugal meal ■ sunset, and almost directly after wrapped ourselves

in ■ rugs and slept out. ■ at about four next morning to try and stalk a capercaillie, but failed to score, and ■ the night had been cold, everybody ■ quite ready to begin walking again soon after six.

On the third day ■ taken back ■ the village, and our rather disreputable friends being ■ quite reassured ■ to the honesty of our intentions, all assembled outside our host's house to bid us good-bye. Old Netko ■ touchingly drunk, and could hardly speak above ■ whisper to say he was "so happy," and ■ drove off amidst ■ shower of "Sbogoms" repeated all through the village, accompanied with frequent libations of wine brought out by the keepers of every khan along the route. We did a little fishing on our way back, and we were once more in Sofia within the week, the total expenses for this amusing little trip having certainly not amounted to ■ than fifteen shillings a day, including our carriage and four, and presents and tips to all our entertainers and brigand beaters.

CHAPTER X

ON leaving Bulgaria I took up the duties of *Standard* correspondent at St. Petersburg. An idea prevails amongst many, if not most, of my countrymen that Russia is a semi-barbarous land inhabited by rather ferocious savages. I can only say from my own experiences that no place in which I have ever resided has left pleasanter remembrances behind it. My difficulty in writing this chapter is to choose from amongst them all. Undoubtedly first and foremost in my case are the recollections of sport of various kinds, and as hitherto only the briefest allusions have been made to a subject which always interests English readers, perhaps a sketch of what a stranger can find in Russia may amuse.

All round St. Petersburg shooting and fishing rights are hired by so-called clubs, the only exceptions being the Imperial preserves. These clubs are generally open to any well-introduced candidate, and it was not long before I became a member of one of the oldest of them—that of “Trubnikoff Bor,” situated about seventy miles down the Moscow line. We had nominally about thirty or forty members, but not more than a dozen actually used their rights with any regularity. Our ground covered at that time about 54,000 *desiatens* or 150,000 acres, almost the whole of it being forest and bog. It was leased in part from the family of Prince Bagration Mukhransky, whose country house stood over against our shooting-box, and in part from the villagers, who possess all sporting privileges in their respective districts.

Our own quarters consisted in a substantially built log house with eight bedrooms, in which resided our head keeper, a Russian-German from the Baltic provinces, with his wife and family. Old Stutzer was a

well-known character for miles round, and he had been so long in his position that he was considered as part and parcel of the club. Besides being a first-class tracker and versed in every branch of woodcraft, he had managed to get all his under-keepers and beaters into order, and keep them well in hand,—no easy task,—and the only fault to be found with him was that he sometimes tried (and succeeded) to have his own obstinate way with his superiors as well as with his subordinates. Amongst his other accomplishments he was an excellent dog-breaker, and I have seldom, if ever, seen setters and pointers to come up to those which I used to shoot at Trubnikoff.

One of the great advantages of Russia to the passionate sportsman is that there is hardly a month in which he cannot be out either in wood or marsh. In January and February, of course, the snow is still very thick, and there is no feather to be had unless by early morning gunning after blackcock and capercaillie as they sit on the tops of the pines. But every *porosha*, or fresh fall of snow, gives a chance for a run after hares, foxes, lynx, or wolves. The hare can be easily tracked and followed up to the bush where he is lying, on snowshoes, but the others have to be "ringed" and "flagged." The system of flagging was a revelation to me, and is worth a brief description. The spoor of any game is followed in the usual way until the animal is located within a certain piece of forest, say a mile in circumference. This is very quickly done by a good tracker, who is able to know instinctively where a wolf, fox, elk, or any other creature is likely to lie, and how near he can "cut" his ring. The guns or gun are then placed down wind, and men told off to this work, and practised in it, begin "flagging" the ring. Beginning at about thirty yards on either side of the gun or gunning line, they run round the ring unrolling a long cord, which are tied strips of coloured cloth at intervals of about six feet. The cord is kept at the height required by being hitched on to a bush or twig from time to time. It should always hang at about the running level of the head of the quarry, and as free as possible, so

that the flags may flutter in the wind. Two ■ three quick "flaggers" ■ snowshoes will fix a mile of cord in less than half an hour. The effect of these flags is extraordinary, for there is no animal which will ■ them in cold blood, ■ which will not generally prefer ■ to break back through the beaters rather than force the cord. The usual system is when the ring is complete for ■ crowd of beaters to encircle the far side of it opposite the guns and make as much noise as they can. If the beast refuses to come out, they then enter and drive up to the shooting line. I ■ convinced, however, that this ■ a mistake, especially with elk, which, when terrified, huddle together, and then gallop back through the beaters. A much better system, which I sometimes managed to induce the keepers to adopt, was for one or two of them to enter the ring and move about whistling and clapping their hands, but making very little disturbance. It is quite sufficient for any wild animal to know that ■ man is in his vicinity for him to try at once and put as great a distance as possible between himself and his enemy, and the beating of tom-toms and petroleum cans and firing of pistols is quite superfluous. An examination of the ring afterwards is always instructive, and it will generally be seen that the animal on being roused has soon run up to within sight or smell of the flags, when he has turned and repeated the ■ tactics, until he finally has ■ out upon the unflagged space where the guns ■ posted. It is marvellous with what ease and certainty an expert tracker and woodcraftsman will bring out his game ■ to ■ single gun, with the help of ■ mile of flags. On the few occasions ■ which I have seen the flags "violated" it has always been owing either to undue noise and pressing by the beaters, or close pursuit by dogs.

It ■ not long before ■ invited to join in ■ bear hunt. Having ■ hitherto killed anything large, ■ only too eager to accept, in spite of the somewhat onerous conditions which usually attach to this branch of sport. The custom is for the peasants to seek out the winter lairs of the bears, and having made sure, ■ believing they have done so, ■ into St. Petersburg and offer their bear for

sale. This sounds rather cold-blooded and comical, but the bargain after all is entirely in favour of the peasants and the bear. According to the size of the footprints and the width of stride the weight is guessed, and a contract is made, usually at the rate of about a sovereign a *pood* of 38 lbs. Besides the price of the bear itself, there will be about four or five pounds for the beaters and trackers, and what with sledges and lodging, etc., a bear of twelve *poods* will cost nearer eighteen than fifteen pounds. The sellers undertake to drive the bear out within shooting distance of the guns, and it is always in deep snow, there can never be any dispute on this question. If the buyer misses he has to pay if he had killed—in fact, he bets fifteen pounds or to nothing that he drops the bear; for unless he does there is very little chance of his ever seeing it again. Even if the bear is wounded and has not gone far, the peasants will, unless your own keeper is with you, conceal his whereabouts in the hope of being able to resell him again to somebody else. There was, however, little danger of any tricks being played on my first bear hunt, as my companion was an old hand, and we were, moreover, accompanied by the redoubtable Stutzer. The bear was supposed to weigh about ten *poods*, and his *berloga*, or lair, was at a distance of about two hundred versts altogether from St. Petersburg. My host, M. Garus, undertook all arrangements, and I found myself successively deposited in trains, sledges, and cottages, until at length I was in the forest. Here arose a question, mine host was imperative to the necessity of my having a keeper or other experienced local sportsman standing behind me with my second rifle. This was quite contrary to my ideas, and I refused to admit of it. M. Garus himself had once been rather severely mauled by a bear, which, had he not been already mortally wounded and almost dead before it reached the shooter, would certainly have killed him. Since then he always had somebody to stand by him as a "number" with him when after bears, and perhaps this may have accounted for his anxiety regarding me, my guest. I had a shrewd fancy,

however, that it was rather from a fear that I should let the bear off, and that we should have ■■■ pains for nothing, that such solicitude ■■■ shown. Be that ■ it may, I declared that ■ would not take any further part in the business unless ■ ■■ left absolutely alone; and seeing that it ■■ useless to insist, he yielded the point, and ■■ took up ■■ places in ■ very thick piece of wood about forty paces apart, the flags beginning ■■ twenty paces to my right. The actual *berloga* ■■ ■ this occasion exactly known, which it is not always, and the ring ■■ cut down very small, being not probably more than four or five hundred yards round. I confess I had very little hopes of killing, partly owing to ■ legend that had grown around M. Gatus that it ■■ always he who was favoured by fortune, and partly because it seemed to me that unless the bear came straight out upon me I should not get a chance at him, so thick was the ■■ and the snow. It ■■ a glorious morning, with the thermometer well below ■■ Fahrenheit; but though the drive in the sledge had been cold, it was quite comfortable ■■ we ■■ within shelter. The shouting had hardly been in progress five minutes when I heard the bushes crackling to my front, but scarcely loud enough, ■ it seemed to me, to herald the expected bear. In another moment, though, ■ small whirlwind of snow appeared round a large dark body, which went bowling rapidly past at about twenty paces inside the wood. In another moment he would have been out of the ring just at the spot where the flags began, and I ■■ that it ■■ then ■■ ■■ With that sort of happy instinct which every shooter knows, although I really could not distinguish any part of him, I aimed at his shoulder, and had the satisfaction of seeing him collapse instantly. As, however, he lay on his side savagely clawing and tearing the young trees within reach, I thought it best to give him a second deliberate bullet through the head before raising the triumphant shout of "Gotovo" ■■ my first Bruin. He ■■ a little ■■ the promised ten *oods*, and ■ very fine black coat, so that I ■■ the recipient of numberless ■■ gratulations on ■■ result.

Another bear which ■ me considerable excitement and pleasure was brought to bag in this wise. ■ had been out, also with only one companion, the Baron Schimmelpennick, for two days after elk. It was rather ■ expensive amusement, ■ this particular preserve lay ■ long way from our shooting-box ■ Trubnikoff, and we had to transport old Stutzer and half a dozen keepers and dogs in sledges thither, not to mention paying three or four ■ beaters every day to accompany us if ■ should succeed in "ringing." We had, however, experienced the most atrocious luck; for though there ■ numbers of elk ■ the ground, ■ trifling accident always prevented ■ successful "flagging." On the third day ■ ■ full of hope, ■ Stutzer had reported ■ flock of eight or nine elk in ■ nice thick piece where they usually lay well, and we drove out ■ near ■ ■ dared whilst he and an old poacher named Gribus went to verify and flag the ring. An hour or two passed, and as it was bitterly cold—thirty degrees Reamur—we cleared ■ space, or rather tramped it down, and tried to keep ourselves a little warmer by dancing with some of the girl-beaters, who composed more than half of our force. Towards three, one of the trackers came back ■ tell ■ the elk ■ ringed, but not in their original wood, having gone ■ a mile or so. We slipped into our snowshoes at once and started off, but half-way ■ met by Stutzer, who declared that it ■ useless to try and do anything that day; that it ■ too late, the ring too big, etc.; in fact, ■ string of ■. As, however, neither the Baron nor I wished to stay another day, we ordered the flags to be placed at once, and the beat to take place. I felt perfectly convinced that under these circumstances there ■ small chance of ■ shot, ■ Stutzer pretended to be ■ ■ should not succeed; and if he wished the elk to escape, of ■ he could easily allow them to do so. When, however, after what seemed an interminable delay, the flags ■ up ■ last and the old man ■ round, he somewhat raised our hopes by saying the flock was still in, though he doubted if they would break ■ before ■ grew

quite dark, the sun being already just on the horizon. We therefore told him not to waste time, but after five minutes from the beginning of the beat to drive it straight through.

The Baron some fifty yards to my left with "stop," unarmed, half-way between and the usual "flags" beyond It not long before we heard the elk crashing backwards and forwards, but in the still evening sound carries far, and it growing so dusk that unless one of them galloped close past it would be almost impossible to hope to hit him.

Then the trampling and snapping of twigs ceased for short while, and the wood turned blacker and blacker behind the streak of white foreground. Then steady crackling again, and I could see the birch tops bending one after another as the elk advanced. And yet "it" scarcely seemed coming with the gait of elk altogether! In another moment I was aware (I cannot say that I saw him, or knew except instinctively that it one) of a big bear swinging across a couple of yards of open snow. In less time than it takes to write the words I had fired, with the sort of sudden true snap-aim I have already mentioned, and the shot was followed by a fearful groan, so human and horrible that for an instant I had a ghastly fear that perhaps after all it was not a bear. I shouted to the Russian "Stop!" to ask him what it I had shot, and he answered, "I fear it is Gribus!" My feelings may be imagined. I quickly into my snow-shoes and my way to the dark mass; but as I within yard two I could I had made mistake, and the first of the beaters to out on the track the shaggy-bearded Gribus himself. This a very fine bear, of whose presence, curiously enough, of the villagers round had been cognisant; consequently he cost me nothing, and all the more welcome trophy from having been secured a pure surprise myself and all concerned.

Before leaving the subject of bears I must give an idea of an unsuccessful expedition. Again we only two, my comrade being one of the secretaries of, Embassy, who never before seen a bear.

The [redacted] [redacted] at a remote village requiring some three hours' railway travelling, and then about ten hours' sledging. The weather [redacted] neither good [redacted] bad,—that is to say, neither really cold nor yet at all inclined to thaw,—but the roads were execrable, and we did not reach our destination till nearly noon, having had endless disputes with the *yemstchiks* the whole distance, which turned out to be [redacted] a hundred versts from the station instead of the sixty originally stated. We [redacted] then told that it would be too late to do anything that day, and had to wait till next morning and take another two hours' sledging to the *berloga*. At length and at last we were posted, but after making various inquiries I [redacted] tolerably [redacted] that if the bear was really there, of which I [redacted] beginning to have doubts, and if the beat was properly managed, he was almost bound to come out along a certain little natural path crossing a nice shelter formed by a large fir-tree and [redacted] thick scrub. I therefore told the peasant who was placing the guns to station C. there, whilst I took up position commanding what looked the next most likely outlet. The bear was supposed to be a "ten-pooder" at least, and the cover was not very thick, though the young trees were pretty close together, which is apt to be fatal sometimes to shooting with ball at a running object. At anyrate it [redacted] not long before I heard the bear coming, not from where the peasants had pointed out [redacted] being approximately his lair, but still making directly for C.'s tree. To reach this he had to [redacted] [redacted] almost open space not twenty yards off myself. To my disappointment I saw a lanky little red bear ambling along at a great pace, who did not look to weigh more than six [redacted] seven *poods*. Perhaps had he been a very fine specimen I should have been tempted to fire, but as [redacted] was I preferred to leave him to my companion. He [redacted] it in a bee-line for the tree behind which I had told the headman to place C., and [redacted] my infinite astonishment went past it within a few feet without a shot being fired. On this I shouted, "Where [redacted] you, C.?" and on a reply coming from somewhere away behind on my left [redacted] threw

up my rifle in despair and let fly at the disappearing stern of the little brute, who was by then nearly a hundred yards off, well in the thick, and out of the ring. On hearing the shot, of course the peasants were rushing up, though they ought not to have left their posts summoned—but I was giving this as an example of how a bear hunt ought *not* to be conducted. Reserving my rating for subsequent delivery, though I was so angry that I could hardly speak, I told them to follow the tracks of the bear. To my surprise they were back in a few minutes to say that he seemed to be badly hit, and had turned sharp round after the shot and gone back into the ring. Accordingly we took up positions again and sent in several dogs, who were soon round the quarry and barked themselves hoarse for an hour than an hour without moving Bruin. Two of the hunters then went in, but as soon as they were in sight of him the wounded bear got up with a growl, and they made haste to retreat. After tom-tomming and pistol-shooting had gone on for another hour, and the short day was drawing obviously near its close, I said that unless the bear was driven out forthwith we would ourselves go in and engage him in combat, a thing which the directors of the beat would not hear of. In consequence of this threat the whole of the beaters, about one hundred and twenty, closed cautiously in with a most infernal uproar until within a few yards of where the beast lay, when he suddenly came out with a rush, scattering them like chaff in his path, and made off, apparently little the worse, clean across country. This was the only occasion on which I participated in a bear hunt where the animal was seen and not killed. Of course we had to pay all round, and having no time at our disposal, could not wait to carry on the chase after the wounded bear, who was resold within a day or two, and finally polished off by another Petersburg sportsman. So much for bear-shooting as practised from Petersburg. Anybody who really wanted to shoot a number of these creatures would do better to go away for a month or five weeks to Finland or Vologda,

and he might reckon with tolerable certainty ■ one head per day ■ an average. Personally I much preferred elk-hunting, ■ there always seemed to ■ a far greater element of uncertainty, and consequently of sport, in having to search out and ring in your ■ game than ■ have ■ sleeping bear found for you ■ month beforehand. As, however, the ■ system is employed for all big game, any further description of this grand sport is superfluous. What does not, however, appear to be generally known amongst modern Nimrods is that the practice of "calling" elk in the autumn is successfully followed by poachers and by ■ ■ two of the keenest of amateur sportsmen in Russia. When first ■ mentioned this fact in the columns of the *Field* several writers upheld that no entpean could ever call an elk, but on my mentioning the as is of several well-known hunters in and round St. marsburg, foremost amongst whom was M. Narishkin, an were themselves performers on the birch trumpet, yaon offering ■ give ocular and oral demonstration to Nunbeliever who cared to ■ to Russia for the purpose, tripoint was allowed. I ■ myself attempted this winating branch of woodcraft, since the exposure and regue which is entailed by elk-calling in the ■ bogs rwhich they live was forbidden ■ Several members eour club, however, essayed it under the wings of the teching Gribus and old Stutzer, both of whom could call calk with comparative ■ and certainty.

slOther winter game produced ■ Trubnikoff consisted nynx, fox, and occasional wolves, whilst of course hares he plentiful enough for anybody who cared to take ■ He snowshoe exercise.

s As ■ the snow melted began almost simultaneously the woodcock *tiaga* and the blackgame *tok*. The *aga* is really the first practice the shootist can obtain, and that must be the ■ for what ■ rather murderous method of bringing the longbills to bag. ■ well known to any student of the habits of game-rds, the woodcock just before pairing time ■ in the habit flying backwards and forwards over certain favourite

woods, where the hens are popularly supposed to be concealed, and uttering a hoarse "croak, croak," alternating occasionally with a shrill, sharp sibilation. This is begun about twenty minutes before sunset, and continues for about ten minutes after. The guns generally choose a wide drive cutting in a forest over which the cock have been noticed flying, and take their chance the gay flits the small open space overhead. Of course is guided largely by the cry of the cock, but he is somewhat of a ventriloquist, and a novice the *tiaga* will be astonished how small a percentage of his shots will tell. It is a delusion to think that only cock birds flight whilst the hens are hiding, I have myself been sorry to find eggs inside a bird shot in this manner, since which incident I never cared much to 'hour woodcock in the spring, though I always delighted in it in, ing to the *tiaga* the first delightful spring evenings.

The *tok* is of two kinds—the capercaillie *tok* and the blackcock *tok*. The former is *par excellence* the beloved of Austrians and Hungarians, many of whom would rather knock over an *Auerhahn* than a wild out or a royal stag. There is no denying that it is difficult to repress a certain amount of excitement whilst "jumping up to the capercaillie, but I understood the enthusiasm of my friends for the *tok*, which I always enjoyed as a natural scenic panorama than a spin.

Every *tok* in our shooting was well known, and they were nine or ten of these—some very easy, reserved for his elderly and stout members; others far off and full of sneer which were allotted to the younger and nimble.

Wherever you went you had to sleep out or sit from eleven o'clock up to dawn, which in *tokking* time varies from four to two. The first *toks* will often begin in March whilst there is still plenty of snow on the ground which makes it by no means easy, especially if it freezes at night, rendering the surface crackly.

On a fine night I would often make a bit of a fire for an hour or so, if not too near the *tok*, but generally the best thing to do is to roll in good thick wraps at

sleep till the keeper wakes you. Then you will be treated to one of the most glorious and refreshing spectacles in the world—the awakening of the wood, the forest, and the beasts and birds therein. For an hour or so about midnight everything is still, even the owls hushing, and the first to begin to move again is the nightjar. Next to him is generally the woodcock, then the snipe, with its deafening drumming, so disproportionate to its size. After them the woodpeckers, blackcock, and capercaillie take up the chorus, which is soon joined by the whole feathered army, great and small, the noisiest and most distracting being the thrushes and jays. As I hope some day to write a small work on sport of various kinds in various lands, which I have seen and practised it, I will not enter into any minute details here of the capercaillie's song, which it is called, of his idiotic ecstasy during its penultimate bars, in the course of which execution of which I have, as an experiment, fired off three or four times within a few yards of him without the bird being aware of the fact. Nor will I describe the mysteries of the *skatchka*, the triple jump and imperative stop in any position, often with one leg immersed in ice cold water and reposing on a thorny snag until the cock chooses to resume his chant. All these would require too much explanation for anything but a professedly sporting book to find room for. I never shot more than three capercaillie myself in a morning, and latterly I never would shoot more than one, as there is no satisfaction to myself in killing the handsome bird when once I felt I had him there unconsciously at my mercy. I have heard, however, of six being brought home by one successful stalker—but this is a new and almost record bag.

The blackcock *tok* is to my mind mere massacre, and ought to be forbidden by law. The blackcock differs from the capercaillie in his amours, in that he chooses an open arena to display his charms of voice and feather, and all the grey hens in the vicinity assemble and sit perched around the sort of circus where the candidates for their favour strut and fight.

This spot is chosen by a champion old cock known as the *tokovik*, who always arrives first on the ground and issues challenge, trailing his wings as if they were an Irishman's coat-tails.

The Russian sportsman having discovered a *tok* constructs a *shalashka*—rough hut of boughs, in the most careless and shameless manner, right on the spot where the *tokovik* is wont to parade. Curiously enough, the birds seem in nowise scared by the sudden appearance of this hut. The careful sportsman repairs thither overnight, and sleeps in his hut; and very cold it is—far more than within the shelter of the forest. Before it is light the old *tokovik* arrives, and is followed by a number of young and ambitious cocks, who generally fight amongst themselves, though occasionally a younger than usually impertinent youngster will venture to come within range of the lord of the *tok*.

The sportsman from inside his hut is at liberty to shoot any cock he likes or can except the old one. At the report of his gun some of them will probably fly away for a short while, but only soon to return; and I have seen an old *tokovik* absolutely refuse to be frightened off, and come nearer and nearer to the *shalashka* at each report, crowing and roaring defiance. If by mistake the *tokovik* is killed the *tok* is at once deserted, but as long as he is unmolested, many as five or six (or I daresay a dozen) may be killed several mornings running. Personally I killed one blackcock the first time I went *tokking*; but though I sometimes lay out for the fun of the sight, I again could find it in my heart to shoot any of the performers. During the blackcock *tok*—another side of nature, that of the fields and marshes—the ridiculous antics of the snipe and ruff, the gambols of the hare, the prowl of the fox, and a hundred other pretty and unusual views of wild animal and bird life. In fact, though I imagined myself a fair sportsman and woodcraftsman before I came to Russia, I learnt more in my first year there than I previously gathered from my experiences elsewhere. I have, however, already

said enough, if not too much, about shooting. Other sports which are very open to foreigners — fishing, tobogganning,—ice-hilling, — — mad flight — snowshoes from top to bottom of — snow-covered slope is called,—ice-yachting, racing,—on the flat, and over sticks — — country,—trotting, coursing, etc. My time was of course far too much taken up to allow of my doing more than seizing occasional chances of enjoying any of these, but I made several very pleasant fishing excursions, occasionally had — breathless scud in an ice-yacht at fifty miles — hour across the frozen bay of Cronstadt, went to the races — Czarskoe Selo, Kolomiaga, or the Semeonofsky Ploschad, whenever I could, and for two years attended, and judged in part, the dog shows and field trials of the Kennel Club. I doubt if there is much finer big trout fishing to be had anywhere in the world than — the Harakka Club, near the glorious Imatra Falls, in the Voksa, where in the season — minnow can hardly be cast before being seized by a monster who is — likely to weigh from 15 to — lbs. than from 10 to 15 lbs. I have also had — very delightful grayling fishing in another Finnish stream I need not name, catching trout, grayling, and big roach on the — fly one after the other — fast as I could cast; whilst farther north, within an hour — so of one of the principal towns, I have heard of 750 lbs. of salmon being taken by one rod with the fly in — season, and out of the — stream, when it — too late for ferox, I have creeled a hundred trout in — autumn afternoon. But were I once to give my memory the rein among my recollections of shooting and fishing, horses and dogs, and moor, river, and forest, I should soon be run away with clean out of the — and outside the flags. So I put on the curb and come back to Petersburg. But if I do it will only be, on paper — it usually — in reality, in order to leave it again. This time I will take you with me — to my *Datcha*. A *datcha*, be — known, is — very comprehensive term, meaning any sort of — residence other than one's habitual home, and situated ever so little away from the

centre of the city. For instance, hundreds of townfolk have *datchas* at Crestofsky, and ■■■ on the Vassili Ostroff. Probably it will surprise British readers to hear that the ■■■■ in St. Petersburg is nearly ■ hot and far more oppressive than at Constantinople or Cairo. Consequently nobody who can possibly manage to get away stays over the middle months of the year in the reclaimed bog on which the capital of the Czar is built.

As a rule, the Russian *datchnik* is merely ■ poor town sparrow, who flits as far as he ■■ towards ■ into the country, and bores himself to death in the attempt to believe, and especially to make others believe, he is a country cousin. There is, of course, the rich and "noble" clique, most of whose members possess beautiful country houses of their own, and ■■■ as "Peter" becomes too hot, retire into ■ comfortable villegiatura surrounded with all the delights, and most of the disagreeables too, of their usual town existence. They carry their whole households with them, dress as carefully and elaborately, and are as punctilious in their visiting as if they were in their winter palaces. ■■ these ■■ not the genuine "*datchniki*," consisting of all the working population who can scrape together ■ hundred roubles ■ so, and who treat themselves ■■ ■■ little shanty nearer or farther from St. Petersburg ■■ their business allows, whither, after the day's toil is over, they ■■ escape from the miasmatic steam of the town for ■ few hours, lie on their backs on the grass, or paddle about in ■ marsh, and fancy themselves country gentlemen after their kind. Many of these spend an hour or two every evening in reaching their rural nest, where they arrive worn to a rag with heat and fatigue, and are compelled to rise next morning at five or six to take a train ■ boat back to their offices or bureaux. Yet such is the force of fashion and habit that a ■■ who should spend his whole ■■■■ in St. Petersburg would be looked upon with either pity ■ contempt. A few of the braver spirits stand out against the tyrannous edict, and worry through the summer ■ best they can, with much ■■ comfort ■■ themselves than if they were daily tearing

backwards and forwards between their bureaux and a fictitious château which lacks the ordinary comforts of life ; but it requires considerable moral courage to assert plainly that the fashion of the *datcha*, or country villa, is arrant humbug, and, the whole, it is but a small percentage which resists the outflowing tide that empties the streets of St. Petersburg from June onwards.

When I resolved to enrol myself in the ignoble army of *datchniki*, the first thing to do was to find a *datcha*, which should be far enough away from all other *datchas* to allow of my leading an independent, peaceful life, and which should really be in the country, remote from all town sights, sounds, and smells. I spent about a fortnight in visiting various advertised *datchas* all round Petersburg, the islands, at Gatchino, Czarskoe Selo, Strelna, and suchlike fast resorts, but neither the houses nor the prices pleased me much. In the majority of instances, a most poky and wretched little *datcha* in any one of these modish hamlets would be ticketed at something like a hundred pounds for the three summer months, and this altogether beyond my limit, if the place had pleased me. At last, just as I was wearying of the quest, I saw a notice in the *Novoe Vremya*, as follows :—

“A desirable house of eight rooms, furnished throughout and beautifully situated on the banks of a river, to be let for the summer months. The house stands in its grounds, which comprise ten thousand of wood and field, and the tenant would enjoy exclusive sporting rights the land, together with five or six miles of fishing. Rent fifteen pounds from May to November.”

This tempting bait it was which led to my becoming, for the first and last time, a *datchnik*. On inquiry, I found that the desirable house belonged to a lady, the daughter of a General high in the Imperial service, and boasting one of the oldest names in Russia. Mademoiselle Vera Borissovna delighted at the prospect of a tenant, and begged me to go and see the place beforehand, which I had naturally already fully determined to do ; and she promised to give notice to the steward of my arrival, so that he might show

me the estate. Accordingly, I started off from the War-Station by ten o'clock, and by two reached the nearest point by rail to the promised land. Here I found a diminutive steamer—a sort of steam launch, in fact—which ran up the river, and the captain undertook to deposit me under my future windows. My fellow-passengers consisted of a lady, bound for some other *datcha* on the way, and fifteen or sixteen peasants. The steamer service had lately been initiated by a German who had two small craft running alternately fifty versts up the very corkscrew of the river and back again to the station. The total cost per trip to him was probably about eight to ten roubles, and the average receipts about twenty-five or thirty; but the enterprise was paying well. Besides the passenger traffic he levied a post tax on the *datchniki* scattered along the banks, each, or most, of whom paid him a small subvention per month for bringing their newspapers and letters, which they would otherwise have either had to send for specially or go without. Altogether the venture was lucrative and easy.

We steamed along very leisurely, our course being considerably hampered by enormous rafts of logs floating down, not to mention that we ran our nose into the bank at every extra sharp turn where the current was strong; but the scenery was lovely and the weather was fine, so that nobody grumbled. Our lady passenger had only a vague idea of whither she was bound, and we finally landed her in a hayfield with no house in sight for miles; but she shouldered her bag and tramped stoutly off across country in the firm belief that she would find her way somehow. The farther we went the prettier grew the landscape. Here and there a tiny village crowned a hill, and then the forests would reach from the sky-line right down to the marshy water's edge in beautiful variety of pine, oak, and beech. It took us a good four hours to come in sight of a red-roofed cottage, perched on an eminence, which I pointed out to me as my *datcha*.

For the half-hour we ploughed through a broad lake with a fringe of thick flags and water-lilies, and into

a racing rapid, through ■■■ the river poured from another lake a quarter of ■ mile higher up. The site ■■ certainly admirable, and some serious misgivings ■ had felt, ■ spite of all the glowing accounts given to me, began to disappear. We whistled shrilly ■ ■ ■ opposite Pokrovsky,—for so ■ will call the village,—and with my traps I ■■ bundled into ■ boat and quickly landed ■ the shingly shore. So far ■ good, and I opined the steward would shortly come and annex me. There was, however, nobody visible, except ■ young peasant who had met the boat and taken a letter from the captain, which he opened and read. After its perusal he turned ■ me and inquired what ■ wanted ■ Pokrovsky? To which I replied that I wished to ■■ the steward, and through him the *datcha* of Varotta. Hereupon he pulled off his cap and said that he had only that minute received the letter announcing my possible arrival—that he was the steward, and would do all that he could for me. Having fetched the keys, we climbed up to the house, which had not been opened since last year. On the whole, it was perhaps rather a favourable specimen of ■ Russian *datcha*. Three out of every five of the doors and windows seemed to shut, and the walls appeared to be tolerably watertight. It was, of course, built of wood, with several stoves, which, however, could never have been lighted, as it would be too hot in summer to need them, and in winter twenty such could not have saved ■■ from being frozen to death. There were, ■■ stated in the advertisement, eight ■■■ and a kitchen, ■ pretty porch in front smothered in flowering lilac, ■ patch of ground which might be made into a kitchen garden on ■■ side, and a big covered balcony looking out ■■ the river and the lake behind. The furniture ■■ of the sort always provided—a few tables and chairs, some low shelves boarded in to ■■ as beds, a wardrobe ■ two, and a couple of ancient divans. As everybody always brings his ■■ furniture with him, this is ■ matter of secondary importance in taking a villa. A few hundred yards away from the house stood the farm, an extensive range of buildings falling ■■ ■ less to rack

and ruin, but, nevertheless, inhabited by the steward, by the proprietress when she came down to visit her estate, by a couple of dozen horses and cows, and ■ pack of savage hounds. The former steward used to hunt with these dogs, and generally enjoy himself; but having fallen out with his mistress on some details of management, had retired on a competency, and his place had lately been taken by the young fellow I saw, ■ ex-corporal of the *gardes-à-cheval*. What his qualifications may have been for the post of land-steward I failed to discover, either ■ first inquiry or later acquaintance; but he ■ ■ smart, obliging man, and had the reputation of being honest on ■ salary, not too munificent, of ten roubles, ■ one sovereign, a month. The house being full of dust and dirt, and, temporarily, quite uninhabitable, I appeased the hunger which eight hours of travelling had created by drinking bowls of ■ ■ and eating wild strawberries in the middle of the farmyard, whilst a ■ ■ was being swept and prepared for the night.

As far as prospects of dinner went, they appeared to be confined to the problematical results of the embassy of ■ ragged little girl sent down to some fishermen ■ the lake. She soon returned with ■ couple of pike and ■ ■ perch, and with these and ■ few eggs a decent enough supper ■ ■ furnished. No meat was ever to be had nearer than the railway station, though chandleries of the commoner sort could be bought at the village shop in ■ hamlet that could be seen nestling amongst the hills on the other side of the lake. Beer of a vile kind was also retailed there, of which I tasted a specimen bottle; but it was evident that anybody meaning to live at Pokrovsky would have to bake their own bread, arrange for ■ supply of meat from St. Petersburg, and bring their own drinkables and other luxuries with them. Whilst at dinner a venerable old man stalked up to the balcony, and, naming himself as representative of the local authorities, expressed ■ desire to see my passport; but ■ ■ hearing that on this occasion I was only passing the night there, consented to overlook the absence of this indispensable document. Soon after him

a toothless dame staggered up the hill, bending beneath the weight of ■ sack of potatoes which she had carried for fifteen versts. Owing to her dental deficiencies it ■ difficult to understand ■ word she said, but the steward told me she was ninety-five years old, though still very active and hardworking. Later on I hired a boat from her, a heavy, lumbering concern, which she towed up herself for several miles, in the water up to her knees, and altogether she seemed to be capable of any ordinary man's labour.

On questioning the steward about the sporting capacities of the estate, he declared that game of all sorts abounded, from bears, in such numbers that the peasants ■ afraid to go into the thick woods, down to snipe and quail. He also gave great accounts of the coarse fishing, and related how one haul of the net on the lake was sold last year for four hundred and twenty roubles to peasant speculators on the banks. Seeing the price is something like twenty to thirty copecks a *pood* of forty pounds, ■ rouble would, roughly, buy ■ hundred-weight, ■ that the catch must have been enormous; and the fact of its having really occurred was confirmed to ■ afterwards by one who bought ■ third part of it, and made a handsome profit on the transaction. As the steamer passed ■ its backward journey at eight o'clock in the morning, and I wished to have ■ stroll and ■ dip in the lake before leaving, I dismissed the steward at ten, and turned in to ■ sleep somewhat troubled by mosquitoes, but quickly brought on by the sweet, fresh air blowing in at the windows. At four o'clock I was wakened to drink a bowl of warm milk, and ten minutes later was ■ my way through the dew-soaked grass to the ice-cold water of the lake. That evening I was back amidst the smells and fumes of St. Petersburg, having thoroughly made up my mind that, circumstances permitting, it would not be long before I paid my hundred and fifty roubles, and became lord of the ■ of Pokrovsky, its broad woods and marshes, its river and sedgy lakes, its steward, its horses and cows, and its simple peasantry. It ■ ■ *datcha* of

the genuine sort, and if ■ had been ■ to town and more easy of ■ would have commanded ■ fabulous price. But what ■ its disadvantages to most ■ its principal attractions to myself. When ■ finally took possession, the first thing to be done was ■ thorough wash and clean out, and after that ■ plugging up of faulty doors and windows. The constructors of the house seemed ■ have had ■ curious idea of decoration. The place was built of logs—was in fact nothing more than ■ large and substantial log hut, its interstices being filled up with moss. Yet the ceilings ■ most carefully papered, ■ that whilst the doors, windows, and walls, and the rest of the interior, had been left in woody nakedness fresh from the adze and innocent even of the plane, the stoves and ceilings had received the whole of the artistic and decorative attention of the architect in the shape of paint and flowered papers. There ■ very few conveniences for the stowage of articles of everyday use, so we had ourselves to put up several ■ of shelves; and these, with a hundred or two of big nails driven into the walls, served instead of cupboards or chests of drawers. It may not be very elegant to have one's wardrobe hung up round the room, but at anyrate all the garments are handy, and they also in some degree fill up the bareness of the room. We had ■ ice-cellar of ■ rough and rude sort, but quite good enough; and the garden, which we planted ■ month ■ so before entering, already began to show promise. This garden ultimately proved ■ great stand-by, as market gardening is very little practised generally in Russia away from the large towns, and but for ■ home-grown salads ■ should often have been entirely without green meat. We arranged with the steamer to bring us papers and letters every evening, and take in our ■ correspondence the following morning for a consideration of three roubles a month. This was absolutely necessary, for the St. Petersburg Post Office, which is in many respects a well-managed branch of the public service, seems to wash its hands of the world which lies outside ■ certain radius of its nearest office. There was no country postman in our

district ■ anyrate, and but for the steamer ■ might have gone without ■ letters until ■ chose to fetch them from the railway station, thirty-five versts off. It is ■ curious commentary on Russian methods that whilst every letter addressed in any foreign language is readdressed by hand at the central office, word for word, entailing an almost inconceivable amount of work on the staff, and delaying the deliveries by a waste of hours, yet with all this elaborate machinery at headquarters, anybody living a few miles off the regular postal routes cannot by any amount of persuasion get his letters forwarded. Thanks, however, to our little steamer, we had nothing to complain of, and only received ■ mails with evening tea instead of with breakfast coffee.

Behind ■ lay several small and insignificant villages with never a shop amongst them, the two *emporia* of commerce being situated ■ the other side of the river; the ■ in ■ hamlet just opposite the house, the other ■ glassworks about two miles off ■ the edge of the lake. The consequence of this was that the peasants in want of provisions had to ■ the water, and there ■ neither bridge nor ferry for many a verst. Now, amongst the plant ■ so-called fixtures appertaining to the *datcha* ■ ■ small rowing boat, which ■ immediately fitted with ■ strong chain and padlock, and having built ■ jetty of planks in the shallows, fastened the boat to it, ■ ■ fancied, quite securely. Necessity, however, knows no law, and whenever we wanted our boat it ■ generally to be seen high and dry on the other side. ■ then bought for six roubles another bigger craft, a simple "dug-out," to use as a fishing punt; but it soon became public property like the small skiff. At first we hid the oars, but that was of ■ avail, as the pirates simply broke down a young tree and punted themselves across, or if in too great a hurry, they took up one of the bottom boards. Remonstrance ■ in vain, and in a very short while our ■ were stolen and our boats lapsed into the common domain. The nearest authority lived ten miles away, and the villagers knew very well that strangers coming to spend ■ month ■ two

were scarcely likely to burden themselves with a prosecution. In the same manner as they made free with our craft so also did they treat with me and contempt the pretended (and indisputable) fishing and shooting rights of the proprietor. I once saw our worthy landlady, or lady of the manor, standing on the bank and protesting against the fishermen netting her water, vehemently declaring that they had no business there. But they simply laughed good-naturedly in her face, with chaffing retorts such as, "Ah! easy there, Vera Borissovna. It isn't your water at all; it's God's water!" or else, taking up a canful, "Is it the water you want, Barina? You are welcome to it; but the fish belong to those who can catch them." And the fusilade that went on all day every Sunday, and on week-day mornings and evenings, showed that the Pokrovsky estate was the happy hunting-ground of the poacher; whilst I saw a poulterer contractor coolly take off more than two thousand head of blackcock, hazel, and willow grouse from my own little jetty under my nose, most of which had certainly been killed in the covers over which I was supposed to have sole sporting rights.

Seeing the way things went, I hired one of the most notorious *braconniers* directly I took possession of Varotta, to assist me in my shooting excursions. Before I had been there a week I caught a loafer in a wood which, I believed, belonged to the estate. He wore a powder-and-shot flask, but professed to be picking strawberries. A little search, however, revealed his gun, hidden in a tuft of grass, which I estreated, and told him he might call for it when he liked. Next day he arrived in a pelting storm of rain, and, uncovering himself, knelt down on the grass under the balcony and begged for his gun. I told him that I had just sent it to the Volossnoy Upravleniye (rural police centre), where he would find it, and probably get a month's imprisonment. On hearing this he broke out in mournful howls, and declared that he had been on Pokrovsky ground at all. I had meanwhile found out that the wood where I had met him was really

not part of my shooting; but wishing to give him and his like a fright, I wrote out a full confession of guilt, which I offered him to sign if he wanted his gun back. He affixed his signature very regretfully, observing parenthetically that it was a colossal lie, but that God was merciful, and that it did not much matter what he wrote, as the devil might fly away with him if he ever gave me another chance of catching him.

My own private poacher, transformed for the nonce into head keeper, lived about eight miles from the house in a clearing in the forest. His "village" consisted of four houses and nine "souls"—that is, nine able-bodied men, and children having souls in Russia. His own family comprised his father, mother, pretty sister, and three sons, himself the third and youngest. The rest of the "souls" were all relations. At the liberation of the serfs they were left in possession of their cottages and a very small patch of land each. As the families grew, however, they had need of more land, and took it from the proprietress on the usual terms of giving all the labour and taking half the yield. For various reasons, though, the landlress wished to get rid of them, as she did not like this little nest right in the middle of her estate. She offered them broader and better fields elsewhere, but they declined. She threatened to put the law in motion; but they resisted with their own lawyer and won the day, and an armed peace was signed. Instead of paying rent in kind for the land they cultivated, they paid in roubles, and were extremely flourishing. I inquired of Vera Borissovna the reason of the special prosperity of this little colony, and she said that it was partly owing to their own shrewdness and industry, but chiefly to their position in the centre of the wood, and on the edge of a vast bog. From the wood it was impossible to prevent them from helping themselves to fuel and game, and the wild fruit on the marsh was a small fortune to them. The principal trade is in cranberries, which grew there in a profusion I have never seen approached elsewhere. An old woman could gather eighty pounds in a day, and the St. Petersburg

dealers pay three to four copecks a pound, she could earn three roubles a day. Wild raspberries and strawberries were also especially fine, together with the rarer *maroshka*, a kind of white raspberry, rather insipid in taste, but much appreciated by amateurs. It may amuse English readers to learn the terms of my agreement with Vassili. He was to be at my disposal whenever I wished him to accompany me in the woods and carry cartridges and game. He was to have a room and a bed at my disposal at all times, and to feed myself and my dogs with milk, honey, eggs, bread, etc. He had to provide a horse for me to ride home after any specially hard day, and he was to abstain from shooting game himself on the Pokrovsky estate. Elsewhere he was free to poach as much as he liked. For these multifarious services he received twenty roubles, or two pounds, a month, and he earned them honestly, thinking nothing of walking the eight miles to meet me, then going through a long day of ten or twelve hours, and walking back alongside the pony to my home by ten or eleven at night, reaching his own cottage again after midnight.

The glass factory on the lake was the most important feature in the domestic economy of the district. It employed a varying number of hands, from six hundred up to eight or nine. All the skilled artisans were extremely well paid, and the turnout was very large. Three times a week a steam tug took four barges laden with glass down the river to the railway, at a cost entirely nominal, and this facility of transport rapidly made the fortunes of the owners. The finest sand abounded everywhere, and hitherto they burnt their own wood, but, having exhausted the supply, they were now constructing new furnaces for burning petroleum. As each barge carried five hundred *oods*, the weekly production of glass may be roughly estimated at a hundred tons. Every imaginable kind of article in glass was produced, from the very commonest bottles and tumblers up to delicate chemical retorts and fine-cut decanters. There was no sale at the works, but the hands stole as much as they wanted,

and probably nowhere else in Russia ■■■ the poorest houses ■ plentifully supplied with table and household glass. We had scarcely been ■ couple of days in the *datcha* before ■ disreputable-looking lad presented himself with various articles, which he offered to sell for next to nothing. The factory itself is the centre of ■ considerable village, all of whose wants ■ supplied by ■ mean-looking shop. But if the exterior is paltry, there ■ big storehouses behind, and the trade done is astonishing. The shop is kept by ■ middle-aged spinster, whose sister holds a restaurant ■ the railway station. Besides these two establishments, the family, which includes ■ nephew, are proprietors of a *kabak*, or grog shop, about a mile and ■ half away from the factory, and the only ■ in the district. By law ■ *kabak* is allowed near to a factory in country districts, and the privilege of opening this one, and their shops, together with a small capital necessary for commencing business, they ■ to their old feudal lord, who, on the emancipation, granted them these favours. The weekly turnover in the susty little shop at the factory averaged two thousand roubles, of which at least fifty per cent. may be reckoned clear profit; and there were no bad debts, for, by arrangement with the Company, the hands were supplied on credit, and the accounts paid direct by the cashier to the shop out of the wages. Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of the business ■■ that the lady in charge could neither read ■ write with any fluency, yet she managed her accounts ■ excellently that she ■■ reputed to be worth about seventy thousand pounds sterling. This included the profits of the other two establishments, but excluded the value of the houses themselves, being her, ■ rather the family, fortune in cash. In spite of this wealth, however, these good folk retained their pristine simplicity, and served their counters, or the table of ■ guest, as respectfully and civilly ■ the humblest paid servant. It ■ almost unnecessary to add that they ■■ of German descent, and that it ■■ their Teuton caution and business blood which enabled them to profit so largely out of the careless, spendthrift Russian.

On Sundays the factory was closed, and the countryside rang with revelry. The harmonica is the favourite musical instrument, and singing and dancing went on everywhere to a liberal accompaniment of vodka, which towards evening generally got the better of the crowd, and laid them out on the grass or in the first comfortable ditch. The second Sunday I spent at Pokrovsky, a couple of vagabonds came stumbling up the hill, in a very excited condition, to beg leave to take my boat. Had they not been drunk they would have despised this formality, but, as it was, they were very earnest, finally declaring that they needed it to rescue a comrade, who was very helpless and trying to walk across the river. Had he really been drowning, the assistance of his friends would have arrived far too late, but, luckily, the pair came back in about ten minutes to say he had swum across all right, and would we give them a cigarette? As they were only slightly the worse, and seemed merry dogs, we treated them to another bottle of beer and drew them on to tell us their stories, which they were quite ready to do, to the extent of one of them relating how he had lately robbed his uncle, a retired old soldier, of six hundred roubles, the savings of a lifetime. The old gentleman had gone nearly mad with grief and rage, and as a last resort had promenaded through the village vowing that if he did not recover his money in twenty-four hours he would go to the authorities. This threat decided the thief, who forthwith slid the money under the door. "Because, you see," he remarked, "that is very dangerous. She puts water in a saucepan, and my uncle would have looked in the saucepan and seen my face, and if he had put his finger in my eye in the water I should have become blind. I preferred to give the money back and keep my eyes." No amount of questioning or chaff could shake their belief in the power of this village witch, who has a great reputation for versts round. One of these scamps had his accordion with him, and his companion, though he could not stand upright without support, insisted on treating me to a series of fantastic dances, on the

conclusion of which they [redacted] their caps respectfully, and smoking one cigarette between them in turns, ambled off to their home, about two miles off.

One day I had a long conversation with the proprietress of Pokrovsky, Vera Borissovna. Of course the estate [redacted] not really named Pokrovsky, [redacted] did it belong to a Vera Borissovna, but, barring the names, which are taken haphazard, there is nothing imaginary in my descriptions. I found my energetic landlady, crowned with a dilapidated straw hat and shod in stout boots, standing in the farmyard, and dealing out medicine to [redacted] peasants who had tramped a long way to have the benefit of her skill. She [redacted] just starting to superintend the erection of a new threshing-floor and grange, which she [redacted] building without the assistance of any professional architect. The work was not in a very advanced stage, but, with the eye of faith, Mademoiselle Vera already saw her machinery installed in [redacted] piece, the horses going round in another, and the grain piled high in a third. The bricks [redacted] being burnt close by, and the walls were composed of big lumps of granite as a basis, only the exterior being levelled with bricks. The mortar was verily of a villainous quality, but possibly the weight of stone would keep the [redacted] standing, if it ever were finished. It seemed, nevertheless, a parlous undertaking, and [redacted] which very few Society ladies in England or elsewhere would enter upon with such absolute confidence. For Vera Borissovna [redacted] essentially [redacted] aristocrat of the aristocrats, boasting [redacted] of the oldest blood of Russia, owning a magnificent house in one of the most fashionable streets of St. Petersburg, besides two or three country estates, and speaking half a dozen languages purely and fluently. On these estates she spent most of the [redacted] months, making all her [redacted] contracts with her tenants, and acting as her [redacted] steward, surveyor, architect, farmer, and what not. She had been in some perplexity the week before [redacted] to how she [redacted] to blast her stone, but in the nick of time a party of travelling blasters [redacted] [redacted] along, and had been engaged forthwith. These men furnished all their [redacted]

tools and powder, and charged ■ penny per inch drilled in ■ granite, ■ rate of remuneration which could hardly leave very large profits. Besides thus obtaining the necessary stone, ■ valuable field ■ gradually being cleared of the rocks and boulders with which it was covered, and a double end was being served at one and the same time. Our appearance on the scene ■ the signal for redoubled activity, but nobody seemed able ■ do much more than dig without appealing to Mademoiselle for instructions, which ■ always given with the unhesitating authority of ■ professional architect; though whether the lady herself actually felt the confidence she professed in being about shortly to finish the work, it would be difficult to say. She was leaving that afternoon to visit another estate of hers some thirty or forty miles away, there to decide a knotty point, whether or no to cut down a forest of young birch and turn it into meadow land. She, apparently, had neither asked, ■ had any intention of asking, for outside advice, but was merely going to settle the point after inspecting the quality of the wood and of the grass. Seeing that she had a hundred and one directions and orders to give before her journey, ■ left her after a hearty invitation to attend her winter receptions, and wondered if ■ should recognise in a drawing-room the energetic farmer lady I said "good-bye" to ■ Pokrovsky.

As ■ large proportion of general readers ■ ladies, a fact which writers are occasionally too apt to forget, a few details of our housekeeping arrangements in the *datcha* may, perhaps, be of interest. We were five in number at table, with three servants, and the total expenses for the first month, including wine and beer, and everything in fact, except wages, amounted to sixteen pounds twelve shillings. (The rent, ■ already stated, ■ fifteen pounds.) For this ■ we had a morning breakfast, a heavy meal ■ two o'clock, and a supper again at ten. The usual *menu* would be soup, fish, beef or mutton, game, salad, and ■ sweet dish, four ■ five bottles of beer, and ■ or two of wine. The butcher

came once a week, and we then bought all that was wanted, and kept it in the ice-cellar. Meat fifteen copecks, about fivepence a pound—a chicken the same price; eggs three farthings apiece, milk a penny a pint, and three pence a pound; fruit of most sorts a penny a pound, a circumstance of which we profited to make a great stock of jams and syrups; and vegetables cheap enough, when procurable at all. We relied chiefly, though, on our kitchen garden for these, and also baked our bread. The second month, having learnt more of the ways and capacities of the place, the bills amounted to just under ten pounds, the principal item being the beer and wine. These figures read very temptingly, but it is only right to add that we enjoyed the experience of an extremely clever housekeeper, and no visitor from England could hope to buy his holiday so cheaply. At the same time, by engaging a respectable German-and-Russian-speaking cook, of whom there are dozens always to be had by advertisement, an English family might take a *datcha*, and spend two or three months far more cheaply than in the usual holiday resorts.

But I fear that I have already severely tried the patience of the reader with descriptions of country life in Russia, and so must bring this chapter to a close. It would indeed be easy to fill a decent-sized volume with recollections of my four years passed in the empire of the Czar, but as I have only this chapter, which has already reached its destined length, I must leave untouched for the present my pleasant souvenirs of the Volga and Finland, of Moscow and Little Russia, and with regret turn southward.

CHAPTER XI

THOUGH I enjoyed myself immensely in Russia, it only became ■■■■ apparent the longer I stayed there that St. Petersburg was a tomb for a newspaper correspondent. The illness and death of the Emperor Alexander, and the marriage of Nicholas II., gave us a temporary spell of work, but as soon as the ■■■■ order had taken the place of the old the censorship lapsed into its pristine barbarity, and news became ■■■■ scarce as it was wont to be. I was consequently not sorry professionally when the *Standard* offered to give me Constantinople as ■■■■ change, and I was back in my first love amongst Eastern cities when the Dongola Expedition was decided on. ■■■■ received my instructions from Mr. Mudford ■■■■ Monday the 16th March, and left for Cairo by the next steamer on Wednesday, reaching the Hotel Continental ■■■■ the 21st, in time for lunch. The first thing to be done was to buy horses and kit; and this was no easy task, as most of the available nags had been snapped up at once, and dealers ■■■■ opening their mouths very wide for anything good. After ■■■■ great deal of inspection and haggling, I finally purchased a handsome bay, for which I had to give £40, but ■■■■ he ■■■■ nearly thoroughbred it was not really very dear. A many-coloured tent of the usual Egyptian pattern was the next purchase, and the Citadel stores furnished ■■■■ with almost everything else. These stores were under the charge of Major Gordon, a nephew, I believe, of the hero of Khartoum, and it ■■■■ owing in ■■■■ large measure to their capabilities that the Dongola Expedition ■■■■ enabled to start at such short notice and to be ■■■■ admirably equipped throughout the campaign. Not ■■■■ mention also that it ■■■■ out of them too that special ■■■■ correspondents ■■■■ permitted to

fit themselves out with a thoroughly serviceable kit at about one-fourth of the cost of the articles as priced in shops. To take an example: a Sam Brown belt and the Citadel cost something like five or six shillings, and the same article was ticketed at thirty-five shillings in the Ezbekieh. The most admirable of all the necessities to be found at the Citadel, and nowhere else, were the water bottles. I believe I have seen the water bottles of most armies and peasantry, but nothing approaches the Egyptian Army pattern for serviceableness and for keeping the water cool. The bottle, or bag rather, is made out of thick canvas, which becomes absolutely watertight, and into one of it is sewn firmly about two inches of the neck of a bottle; a cork is attached with a string, and a couple of stout brass rings or D's are stitched in. With a couple of double swivels this bottle easily be snapped on the D's of a saddle, and will keep the water cool and fresh on the hottest day in any way which I have seen any other do. It is also very capacious, holding, I should think, a couple of quarts. Later in the campaign these bottles in great demand, and certainly, were I ever again to travel in a country where water had to be carried, I should not take less than half a dozen of the E.A. pattern.

My outfit from the Citadel comprised a saddle, cavalry pattern, several of these water bottles, a camel riding saddle, a cavalry sword and belt, holsters, and numerous saddle bags. Had I wanted, I could also have clothed myself in riding breeches and coat of *khaki*, boots, etc.; but though I believe most of my colleagues are in the habit when on the warpath of donning *khaki* and helmets, I always found it comfortable myself to dress in flannels or good light cloth, and to wear a broad-brimmed Terai hat—single for choice. I mention this latter article especially on account of the current delusion that a pith helmet is the only protection against sun-stroke. I only say, speaking from a long experience, that I have always found a single grey felt hat adequate, and much cooler than any helmet. But of course hats

and clothes must always be ■ matter of personal taste. Whilst ■ the subject of heat and head covering, though, I must ■ any misguided stranger from doing what most of the newspaper specials with the Dongola Field Force did, namely, shaving their heads with the idea of feeling cooler. As a matter of fact, the hair is much the best shield against the sun, and to lay bare the crown of one's head we soon found to be the greatest mistake in the world.

Two or three days were sufficient for ■ to get together all I wanted and to start my horse and groom off to Belianeh by land.

When I at length reached the post-boat, the *Hatasoo*, ■ found several old friends on board, amongst them being Hickman and Maxwell, the latter, whom ■ have already mentioned ■ a boxer, being now a Brigadier-General. Another passenger who attracted some attention ■ Dr. Conan Doyle, who was going up to get notions. As nobody ■ allowed south of Assouan without being on recognised business, the novelist had taken a temporary commission ■ Special Correspondent for, I think, the *Westminster Gazette*, and another amateur ■ Mr. Julian Corbett for the *Pall Mall*.

On getting to Assouan ■ found several colleagues already there—Knight of the *Times*, Scudamore of the *Daily News*, Gwynne for *Reuter*, Seppings Wright for the *Illustrated*, and Pearce for the *Graphic*. Soon afterwards ■ were joined by Sheldon for *Black and White*, and Garrett for the *New York Herald*, with Atteridge for the *Chronicle*.

As in Cairo I had had to buy a horse before all things, ■ in Assouan it behoved ■ to buy camels, and I ■ had three of these horrid creatures, which ■ of all beasts the most disagreeable and unlovable. In fact, when I paraded before leaving for Wady Halfa, my caravan already consisted of ■ horse, three camels, ■ donkey, two grooms, ■ cook, and ■ body servant. The donkey ■ bought with the intention of occasionally riding him myself, but he was usually bestridden either by the cook

or the valet, irrespective of any amount of luggage the poor little brute had to carry, on the top of which they would perch themselves. If it be of any service to future correspondents or travellers in Egypt, I may here remark that it is quite fatal to peace to have ■ team of servants of different breeds. They should be either all Berberins or all Egyptians, as these two races never get ■ together, and do nothing but quarrel and fight all day and all night. As it is very difficult to get a decent Egyptian groom, this trade being almost monopolised by the Berberins, it will generally be found better to take ■ Berber for *sifrâgee* and cook—impudent and scampish as he is pretty sure to be. It does not matter ■ much in ■ groom, but insolence and other common Berber vices are extremely objectionable when more obtruded, as they ■ in the person of domestic attendants. However, everyone must take his ■ choice between the various evils of camp servants, which are amongst the most trying of all in ■ campaign.

After being a few days ■ Assouan most of the correspondents decided to march to Halfa, instead of going up by boat, chiefly as a sort of preliminary canter, so to speak, in order to see how our arrangements would work. The night before we invited Captain Lyons, who ■ anchored off Philæ in his *dahabeeyah*, engaged in archæological work, to dinner on board his own boat. That is to say, ■ provided ■ or two dishes, and he found all the rest; but ■ had ■ merry evening, and only separated at midnight. I pitched my camp by the old railway station, and had my first sleep out, surrounded by my grunting camels and retainers. Next morning it struck us that we had better have a guide, and this commodity did not arrive from Assouan till three in the afternoon. We determined to start, nevertheless, and did so, not without difficulty, an hour later. Just about sunset ■ reached a horrible *akabah*, or defile, and each camel had to be separately escorted and supported down it, with much objugation and many cries of “*Ya Sâtir*,” “*Ya Sahib el Hawiyeh*.” By the time ■ reached the bottom it ■ quite dark, and ■ ■ all somewhat the worse for ■. However,

the indefatigable Scudamore undertook to cook us ■■■ dinner,—our *chef* having been sacked at Philæ, from the failure of his efforts at ■ currie the day before,—and ■■ turned in fairly comfortably ■■ about ten. Next morning loading-up took us ■ hour, which was disappointing; though, as ■ simple fact, we ■■ succeeded in performing this operation much more rapidly, even after months of practice. It was very hot even when we started at half-past seven, and soon after ■■ we elected to go no farther that day, and camped under a big banian tree. Next day ■■ reached Kalabsheh, a town which supplies half Egypt with grooms and *sâisses*, and where, of course, all our servants had families and relations.

Next morning ■■ threaded a most atrocious pass, but came out of it with whole skins, singing "Litoria" and other songs of our native land. This ■■ on the 5th of April—Easter Day. Our march ■■ continued, with various amusing incidents to ourselves, up to the 9th, when we entered Korosko, and with ■■ consent voted for doing the rest of the journey by water, leaving our beasts to ■■ on in charge of the servants. I had here to have my horse shod, or rather unshod, as he had cast ■ shoe, and I thought it best to take off the companion one. The whole veterinary and farrier force of the Korosko garrison ■■ required, however, as the brute refused to allow the smith to approach him. With great difficulty he ■■ at last thrown, and his shoe removed, but not until he had severely kicked and bruised two or three men, for which damages I had to pay the usual compensation. His bad temper, however, decided me to get rid of him, which I did soon after at Halfa, exchanging him with Colonel C. Martyr for ■ quieter and steadier old grey.

At Halfa we found things very busy in preparation for the later advance. It was here, too, that ■■ were first brought under discipline. To begin with, we were asked to give our word of honour not to send, ■■ try to send, any telegraphic messages otherwise than through the Censor—that is, ■■ ■■ not to post them to Cairo ■■ intermediate stations. This was rather a facer for some of us, as it at

■ reduced ■ all ■ or less to the ■ level of news allowed to pass by the Censor. On the other hand, it did away with ■ good deal of the cut-throat rivalry usually exhibited when "specials" are on the warpath, and it ■ not altogether ■ unpopular decree. We ■ also given our rations for camels and horses, etc., and free quarters ■ ■ ■ found for us in ■ couple of pleasant little villas on the banks of the Nile. Our amateur colleagues, Doyle and Corbett, here left us, with, I think, many mutual regrets; they that they could not accompany the expedition, and ■ that ■ were losing such excellent comrades.

At Halfa I made ■ fresh addition to my outfit, in the shape of ■ felucca, or little sailing boat. As soon ■ the bargain was completed, I sent it up the cataract, and it was the last craft to pass the gates up to Sarrass until the Nile began to rise. This boat was throughout the latter half of the campaign one of the greatest boons to me, being capable of carrying the whole of my kit and ■ veying me from place to place in luxury and comfort, compared to which riding ■ camels, or even horses, was hard labour. The felucca was partially decked, and large enough for ■ to spread a thick mattress and lie at full length, if so inclined. Though not averse to plenty of hard exercise when necessary, I have always tried to take my rest as completely ■ practicable; and ■ of my camels usually carried little else than ■ *ankareeb* ■ native bedstead and my folding mattress and other bed-furniture. This sybaritism brought down a certain amount of chaff ■ the *Standard* correspondent, but I fancy there ■ also at times a good deal of envy when night-time ■ on, and my big four-legged bed ■ got ready.

Time lagged very wearily at Halfa, as the river fell lower and lower, and the ■ grew hotter and hotter, and ■ had next to nothing to do, to see, or to write about. At last came the little scrimmage at Akasheh—the first action of the campaign—between some Egyptian cavalry and some dervish irregulars. The ■ reached Halfa ■ evening, and was given to the Press after dinner ■ about ten by Maxwell, who was then Camp Commandant, but

who would not allow us to wire anything. Next morning several of us ■■■ up very early, in the hopes of getting off the first news; but it transpired afterwards that it had been sent straight from Cairo the night before, ■■ that the veto on ■■■ sending and our energies the following morning were equally superfluous. The story of the fight, however, had broken the monotony, and ■■ at once asked leave to go to Akasheh and visit the ■■■ of action. This ■■■ only granted with certain restrictions, such ■■ that we ■■■ all to make ■■■ party, and to go and return with a camel convoy, etc. Under these circumstances, I, for one, did not think it worth while; but as I had found out several *lacunæ* in my arrangements,—especially wishing also to make some special understanding about "urgent" telegrams,—I thought I would run down to Cairo whilst my colleagues were at Akasheh.

Whilst there I settled that by marking messages "Urgent" they would pay the treble rate all through, but by marking "Local urgent" they would only be taxed extra ■■ far as Alexandria, and of course would have precedence over the whole of the Egyptian system.

No sooner had I returned than I had ■■ characteristic skirmish with the Sirdar. I had learnt, quite legitimately, as far as I was concerned, the formation of the columns which were to march from Akasheh, together with the ■■■ of the new Brigadiers, Macdonald, Lewis, and Maxwell, together with various other details, and wrote out a telegram containing this information. No sooner had Sir H. Kitchener ■■■ this than ■■ orderly ■■■ sent to fetch me, and he inquired if I imagined he ■■■ going to let such a message pass. I replied that I did not see any harm in it myself; but of ■■■ that ■■■ for him to judge. He replied that there was not ■■ much in the telegram, but that what he objected to ■■■ the fact that I should be in possession of information which he declared ■■■ only known to ■■■ or two others besides himself.

"Why, none of the Brigadiers themselves know they ■■■ going to get their brigades! A nice thing, indeed!

They would be getting messages from England, 'Congratulate you, old chappie,' and they would not know what for! It destroys ■ my confidence in my staff and in you correspondents; that is all I ■ say!"

This ■ rather a serious imputation, to which I could only retort that if he had any accusation to make against me, ■ should be quite ready to meet it; but that ■ could ■ him that none of his staff had betrayed his confidence by ■ much ■ word. He ■ not to be pacified, however, and evidently only half believed me, ■ was proved by ■ order immediately issued, that nobody on the staff was to hold any communication whatever with the war correspondents. This absurd order continued in force until after the battle of Ferket. I call it absurd, because either we and they were fit to hold our respective positions, or we ■ not. If not, the matter ought to have been threshed out and the guilty punished; but if ■ were blameless, why should we be treated like naughty school children?

On Tuesday the 2nd June, with heartfelt delight, we bid farewell to Wady Halfa, and started at two in the afternoon in a so-called saloon carriage, packed like sardines, with the Black Officers of the Tenth Soudanese Battalion. It was stifling hot, and the train simply crawled along, finally reaching Ambigol Wells at ten at night, and depositing us casually in the middle of the desert. Luckily for me, I found two hospitable engineer boys, Lieutenants Girouard and Pritchard, who gave ■ whisky and soda, after which I rolled myself up in ■ rug on the sand, and slept for an hour or two; but at three o'clock the whole camp moved. The Intelligence Department and the "Specials" left at ten, but as I was expecting ■ more luggage up from Sarrass, I waited over lunch-time, despatching ■ *magnum* of champagne with the ■ Brigadier-General, Lewis, and then writing correspondence until four, when, together with my artist colleague, who had kept ■ company, I mounted, and we marched out with the gallant Tenth. We merely went for ■ hour or two, though, and turned in early that night, only to rise ■

daybreak on the 4th, and push on to Okmeh, where ■ found Colonel Wingate and Lieutenant Smyth in possession of ■ otherwise deserted camp. There had been ■ big fire there the day before, and being foolish enough to lie down under some palms, just outside the edge of the burnt patch, I was soon so smothered in fleas that a bath in the river and another in a tub provided by Smyth could not rid ■ of the pests. Next morning we pushed on, and reached Akasheh soon after eight. Here we found our colleagues in a state of wretched discomfort in a miserable and dusty corner, designated for our ■ ■ the correspondents' camp—the first of many superior, but, I think, few ■ ■ ■. Nobody, however, except the Sirdar and ■ ■ two of his staff, ■ much better off, and as it ■ ■ mere temporary base for the advance, there ■ nothing to grumble about. Though no notice had yet been given, it was an open secret that ■ were to advance on Ferket very shortly, and ■ the 6th we were at last ordered to be ready to start at four in the afternoon for ■ night march.

I had bought another horse from Colonel Trombi, the Italian Military Attaché, but he was ■ undersized and wretched little animal, and ■ only had the grey really to rely upon. Just before lunch ■ of the newly-joined young officers asked if any of ■ could lend him ■ horse to parade on, ■ otherwise he would not be allowed to join his regiment. Nobody else responding, I offered mine, devoutly hoping that he would not be able to accept the *sine quâ non* condition that ■ must have it back in camp at three. However, he jumped at the chance, and after passing inspection all right, returned ■ the nag, and marched gaily all night and into action next morning. The actual distance from Akasheh to Ferket would probably not be ■ ■ than sixteen or seventeen miles, but twelve hours only brought us to Sarkamatto, where ■ left the mountains behind us, and had the village of Ferket still four or five miles ahead.

The place assigned to the correspondents in the march ■ right at the tail, in the ■ of the Third

Brigade after ammunition and hospital camels, but ■■■ not very strictly confined to it, and as soon as the column ■■■ ■■ the ■■■ ■■ were allowed to go backwards and forwards as we pleased. A night march is pleasant enough under some conditions, but not when strict silence has to be observed, and when the road is full of boulders and pits, and has to be negotiated by heavily laden camels, mules, and horses. I had not seen any of my ■■■ animals since the early afternoon, but I trusted to Providence in their turning up later, ■■ they eventually did. The First Brigade got into its camp at about nine in the evening, being of ■■■■ free to make its ■■■■ pace; but the end of the long column only reached its destination after midnight, and all baggage animals were stopped outside the Sarkamatto Pass. Here, accordingly, I went to search for my lost ones, which after ■ long and weary quest I at last discovered, or rather had discovered for ■■ by Major Griffiths, generally known ■ "the Friendly," which he certainly proved to be on this occasion. The only others I ■■ on that night ■■■ the two Brigadiers, Macdonald and Maxwell, perpetually riding backwards and forwards and closing up the column, and poor Roddy Owen, who was also on some such duty. When I had recognised my camels, I told the groom to hold the horse and give him a small feed whilst I tried to snatch half an hour's sleep; but hardly had I lain down when I found the First Brigade moving off, and thought it best to mount again. As it grew light I found myself alongside the 13th Battalion, and soon after heard the first shot. For ■ while the firing was very feeble, and ■■ began to think the dervishes had cleared out; but it was not long before the action began in earnest, both in the hills and down by the river. It ■■■ really a pretty sight, though I confess to feeling something almost akin to pity for the wretched foe, who were caught like rats in ■ trap. The desert column of cavalry and camel corps came up simultaneously with the river column, and there was scarcely any chance whatever of escape except for the well mounted. These, however, very easily distanced

their pursuers, the leaders of the fugitives having gone through Suarda, ■ afterwards learnt, by noon ■ the same day, whereas the cavalry only arrived there on the following morning.

The battle ■ thoroughly described and illustrated at the time, that it would be idle to say much about it. As ■ it ■ over, of course, our servants and the few camp followers in general attempted to loot as much live stock, camels, and especially donkeys and goats, ■ they could. For the time being Major Roddy Owen ■ in charge of the live loot, and ■ I rode past he laughingly asked if I would not like ■ fine moke or two, ■ he had plenty to spare. My first business, however, ■ to find the Censor and despatch my "local urgent" telegrams. I forgot to mention that ■ new regulation had been put in force, whereby no telegram was to exceed two hundred words in length, but any number of such telegrams might be sent marked 1, 2, 3, and so on. All number 1's would go before any number 2, supposing they were paid at the same rate, but of ■ the *urgent* had preference. With the exception of one of my colleagues, the *local urgent* system was known only to myself, and consequently I lay down and wrote out three full-length wires all *local urgent*, had them censored, and despatched them all at once by the groom. I wanted him to ride one of the camels, but he said he would take the horse, though the saddle had not been off his back since two o'clock ■ the preceding afternoon. Not only did he hand in the telegrams at Akasheh early in the afternoon, but ■ back again at Ferket that ■ evening. The pony ■ slightly off his feed that night, but ■ all right the day after, which shows what good little beasts the ordinary Egyptian mounts are. As soon ■ I had sent off my telegrams I felt that I had earned a rest, if I could by any possibility create an opportunity of taking ■ Before ■ repose, though, there came the need of ■ wash, as, between dust and sweat, ■ all in a condition little better than sweeps. A violent wind ■ of ■ blowing, driving up the sand in "devils" and

clouds, and the heat ■■■ terrific. Whilst visiting the hospital my whisky bottle had been stolen out of my holster, and I ■■■ altogether rather badly off for material comforts; but the thought that my despatches ■■ anyrate ■■■ well on the way to Akasheh comforted me to a certain extent. What had become of my colleagues I did not know—nor, to tell the truth, did I ■■■ much, as I made ■ bee-line for the river. The nearest water I struck ■■■ a small pool left by the retreating Nile, semi-stagnant, and not over inviting, perhaps, but at anyrate free from dead dervishes, ■■ that it was not long before I ■■■ wallowing in its rather slimy depths as happy as an Egyptian buffalo. When I had washed off some of the caked sand and dirt I came out, and having no towel, sat on a rock and dried myself in the fierce sun, after which I sought the best shelter I could discover for a nap. It must be remembered that few of us had slept since two nights before, and even then very badly—in fact, as far as I was concerned, I had hardly had six hours of very second-rate slumber in three days and nights. I therefore resisted all the entreaties of my cook to make ■■ a meal, and stretching up a blanket over some palm shoots to keep off the heat, I had an hour or more of delicious sleep, spite of flies and dust. At about two, though, I was roused by finding the Headquarter camp already ■■ the ■■■■ south. Though I could easily have done with another three or four spells of snooze, I did not ■■■ to be left behind, and ■■ mounted my little red camel and started for the new camp. After all it ■■■ ■■■ ■■ less ■ false alarm, and only the Sirdar and one or two of the principal staff pitched their tents beyond Ferket village. But I ■■■ only too glad to get away from the filth and flies and dust of the battlefield, and to be able to lie down in ■■ comparatively clean roost, and above all ■■ quiet one. The only other individual anywhere near ■■ in the ■■■ camp was young Doctor Spong, who ■■■ ■■■ ■■■■ tired than I. We warmed up a tin of rations and ate it with relish, after which he lent me a candle and retired to his tent. I sat out for ■■ hour ■■ ■■

in the open writing up ■ account of the day's proceedings, and then by eleven o'clock lay down under ■ bush and had ■ of the most delicious night's rest ■ ■ could wish for. Next morning I ■ up at six and round at Colonel Wingate's, where I found Brigadier-General Maxwell. I showed them portions of my letter to the *Standard* and my sketch map, and posted the lot in the Sirdar's special bag, which was then being made up, and was carried away by special camel ■ eight. I mention this to show the uncertainties and vicissitudes of ■ correspondent's work. ■ had sat up late at night after two or three very tiring days, and ■ the only correspondent with the advanced camp ■ the night of the fight, and the only ■ whose letter was despatched that morning. Yet ■ colleague who went back to Akasheh ■ the morning of the 7th ■ able to send his letter in from there, ■ as to reach London nearly a week before mine, although the Akasheh post ■ supposed to be kept waiting for the Sirdar's bag. It ■ one of those inexplicable and rather heartbreaking accidents which are never accounted for, and which often go so far towards making ■ marring ■ man's work. Curiously enough, my account of the only other real action fought, namely at Hafir, though also the first posted, ■ reached London ■ all, the boat containing it and other mail bags being the only one out of hundreds which ■ sunk in crossing the river.

After posting my letter and writing out three more telegrams, which I sent in by ■ Ababdeh Arab of the Intelligence Department, I was treated to breakfast and a bath by my hospitable Censor, after which I took it very easy until my colleagues began dropping in throughout the day. Our camp on this occasion was next that of the Intelligence and Headquarters, and was not by any ■ ■ uncomfortable one, though ■ could have done with ■ little ■ room. As ■ ■ certain to stay ■ time at Ferket, my stable companion, Sheldon, and I decided to build ■ really commodious *tukul*; and with the help of various fatigue parties ■ constructed one after Sheldon's artistic design, which ■ ■ good ■

substitute for ■ house ■ could be needed. Now and again ■ ■ than usually violent sandstorm would annoy us, but ■ *tukul* gave ■ good cool shade as a rule, with plenty of air, being built right on the high level shore of the river, and sheltered by half ■ dozen palms whose trunks were incorporated in our walls.

The *tukul* is an ■ improvement on the tent, and throughout the campaign ■ never used our ■ except for our servants and for kitchen purposes. The huge double tents of the staff were habitable, it is true, though not nearly ■ cool ■ ■ good *tukul*; but ■ ordinary small single tent gave scarcely any protection from the grizzling heat, seeming rather to concentrate it while keeping out such breaths of air as occasionally stirred. The *tukul* is built of good stout boughs, planted in the sand and interlaced above, whilst the walls and roof are made of plaited grass and palm leaves. The Egyptian soldiers are all adepts at *tukul* building, and ■ difficulty ■ ■ made about giving us a fatigue party of ten or more men, who ■ remunerated at the rate of about ■ sovereign for a small tent or more for ■ larger one, which they could build, if they had the materials handy, in the course of an hour or two. In less than ■ week the whole of the troops ■ housed ■ in *tukuls* than otherwise, and some of the quarters of the officers commanding battalions ■ absolutely sumptuous, with grass walls half ■ foot thick, double doors, and flap windows, ■ that never ■ fly found his way into the discreet and cool half-darkness which reigned within. The only reflection that forced itself upon me was that the time would inevitably soon ■ when there would at anyrate be no more palm leaves, ■ if any grass remained to plait the *tukul* walls and ceilings. Perhaps, though, before the supply ■ exhausted, a new ■ would have dawned for the province of Dongola, and there would be ■ more need for temporary dwellings like *tukuls*.

Altogether ■ stayed at Ferket camp up to the 4th of July, when it ■ beginning ■ get rather foul, and the Sirdar ordered ■ ■ to Kosheh. Seeing that nearly a

thousand dervishes must have been buried not so very far from █ lines, █ risked █ good deal in staying █ long. Directly after the fight, burying parties █ set to work, with orders to make █ graves within █ thousand yards of the river, for fear of contaminating the water. The mass of the killed █ of course in and round the village, and these were tied together and dragged off by mules to the trenches prepared for them, ten or a dozen at a time. The corpses, however, that lay far away up █ the hillside were mostly left alone, and soon dried up into a quasi-mummified condition, where several remained for months afterwards, lying alongside the █ railway line.

The month █ spent at Ferket was on the whole rather a festive one, and there was scarcely an evening when the correspondents' camp was not the █ of █ dinner-party, followed by █ "sing-song," with banjo accompaniments by Seppings Wright █ Sheldon, who were both artists on the string as well █ on paper. There was also a little shooting to be done for those who had the energy, and I used to shoulder my gun at least three times █ week and go after the geese, sand-grouse, and turtle doves, the latter being far the best in the pot. When first █ arrived at the new camp the wild geese kept us awake with their quacking, but █ very short British occupation sufficed to put them █ their guard, until the Sirdar issued █ order that no guns were to be fired within █ certain radius of the camp. Thereupon the sportsmen went farther afield, and the geese, quickly recognising the immunity, returned to quack and rear their broods under our noses.

There █ also an island a mile or two away, which could be reached by easy knee-deep wading, where there lived a score or two of very long-eared and nimble desert hares. These also grew desperately shy, though, after █ few shots, and it █ too hard work really to beat them out systematically under the broiling sun.

Luckily the very day fixed for moving to Kosheh our anxiously expected boats arrived from Sarrass, where they had been kept up █ then by the low Nile, and

had, in fact, only managed finally to pass the cataracts by great exertions. Our new pitch at Kosheh looked very nice and clean in comparison with Ferket, and ■ set to work forthwith to construct our *tukuls*, and to make ourselves comfortable. As soon as mine ■ up I started off in my felucca to sail up to Suarda, to visit the camp there. It was, however, not a pleasant trip altogether, ■ I ■ seized with something very like cholera, and could not enjoy myself much. Luckily I had a good supply of champagne on board, and ■ the afternoon when I felt the worst, I rigged up ■ bed under a shady tree, and opening ■ magnum, kept myself alive till sunset, when I was lifted on board, and fell asleep whilst we drifted down stream back to Kosheh.

Hardly had I returned there when cholera broke out, the first two ■ occurring ■ the Tenth Battalion, encamped alongside us, the ■ being seized at nine in the morning and buried at ■. The Nile was now rising in green flood, gradually covering ground hitherto exposed, and of ■ polluted with every kind of filth, ■ that the water ■ doubly poisonous with the essence of the "*sudds*" or decaying grasses ■ the Equator and with the impurities it found below. One of the first things to be done evidently ■ to ■ the men away from the river, and prevent both further contamination of the water, ■ much as possible, and the use of the water ■ the edges. Orders ■ therefore given for everybody to leave the edges of the river, and establish themselves ■ least ■ mile away in the desert, whilst all water for drinking or cooking purposes was to be drawn either from a deep pool called the Black Rock Pool or by means of boats from midstream.

I fancy that none of us will easily forget the morning when the whole river camp was struck. The first sight that met us at dawn ■ ■ dead body lying close to one of ■ kitchen tents. It ■ that of a Berber camp follower. In General Lewis' camp ■ ■ left, and amongst the Tenth ■ our right, several ■ had already succumbed, and the horrible sounds of vomiting and groan-

ing were all around us. Then one of our own servants was knocked over and carried off to the hospital to die, and we made what haste we could to shift away from the death-dealing Nile. It was difficult to get the usual fatigue party, and though we were pretty well packed and ready to go in the early morning, nobody came to us till six in the evening, when five of the *hemleh* or transport arrived with ten camels to pull down our *tukuls*, which were of considerable value, and all building material in the vicinity exhausted. These unfortunate fellows had just marched in from Akasheh, seventeen miles, had gone up to the extreme end of the camp to the Ninth Battalion to report themselves, and had then been sent down to us as a fatigue. Neither they nor their camels had had anything to eat all day, and they had scarcely a rag to their backs, yet they made no complaint, but merely asked what was wanted. We gave them a good meal, and they at once set to work with the heartiest will. Sufficient praise was probably given to this branch of the E.A., which had some of the hardest and most disagreeable work, no glory, and very little consideration paid to it. The men of the *hemleh* were generally in tatters and perpetually at hard labour with their camels, yet a merrier, good-tempered lot of fellows it would be difficult to find, and both they and their officers were extremely popular.

Within a day or two the whole camp was attacked from end to end. A little green *tukul* was built as far away as possible from other camps, though of course it had to be within easily reachable distance, and between it and the correspondents' quarters was the cholera cemetery, in which the loathsome vultures were continually hovering, hopping, and fighting, being really attracted by the refuse from the slaughter house, which was also emptied thereabouts—though their presence naturally seemed to associate itself with the burial-ground. There could be nothing like quarantine was all effectively established between different parts of the

camp, so that ■ attempt ■ made at anything of the kind. In this respect every station ■ free to do as its Camp Commandant and doctors wished. At Akasheh, for instance, the strictest quarantine was observed, but in the end the epidemic got in there very badly. In our Kosheh camp we ■ free to go where we pleased, and visited the cholera hospital and the various messes and regiments indifferently.

On the 28th July, when we had already had about ten days of this rather gruesome existence, we heard that some stores had arrived at railhead, the other side of ■ old Ferket camp. As ■ were running short, and there ■ to be ■ competition for anything eatable and drinkable, Gwynne, Knight, Sheldon, and I started off for an early morning ride to try and secure ■ share in the booty. On the way we met Surgeon-Colonel Gallwey, the P.M.O., and Surgeon-Major Trask galloping along apparently in a great hurry. Even the usually cheery Gallwey only answered our chin-chin with a nod instead of an Irish joke, and Trask followed his example. Before we reached railhead ■ saw Fenwick superintending ■ advanced working party opposite the ruins of Ferket village in a cloud of stifling sand, and he told any of ■ who liked to stay to breakfast with him.

When we at length rode up to the engineers' camp the sentries would not at first allow us to pass, but at the end ■ prevailed ■ them to show ■ Fenwick's quarters. Gwynne and Sheldon went back at once, but Knight and I thought we would wait a little for ■ breakfast, ■ it ■ already very hot, and ■ had ridden the six ■ miles at ■ gallop almost the whole way. I remember taking ■ long swill from ■ *goulah* or water jar, which I very seldom did, unless I had myself superintended its boiling, and I also remember a qualm afterwards when in answer to my question I found that Fenwick ■ boiled his water, poor fellow.

When he ■ in, tired and covered with dust and sand, we sat down to porridge and tea. He had only two plates, cups, and spoons, so that Knight and Pritchard

used ■■■ and Fenwick and I the other. ■ had not been very fit for several days past, and so when Knight said he should return immediately he had finished, ■ thought I should prefer to smoke ■ cigarette or two and have a rest. Fenwick then had a short conference with the Egyptian commander of the battalion then employed at railhead, the Seventh, I think, as to the ■■■■■ to be taken with regard to cholera, which had broken out violently that morning as soon as the men had reached the river. For ■ month past they had been working in the desert without a case, but as soon ■ they came within touch of the poisoned water it began. Another almost indisputable cause ■■■ the disinterment now and again of the dervishes who had been lightly buried six weeks previously, often in the path of the railway. That very morning one corpse had been turned up, and one of the soldiers working there ■■■ seized almost immediately with cholera, and died in three hours.

When Fenwick had completed his orders, he too said he ■■■ tired and would turn in, but would like me to take ■ letter in to Headquarters a little later. I waited about an hour, and then going into his tent asked him for his note, but he replied, in ■ very suspiciously thin voice, that Pritchard had sent it already by a special orderly. I asked him how he felt, but he declared that he was all right, only ■ little knocked up by the sun. Poor fellow! within two hours he was dead! Looking in on Pritchard, he gave me another note for Colonel Rundle, but said that as he had already sent in there was no need for me really to trouble.

So I mounted and rode out of that cholera camp to ■ back to our own. About two miles out I met Dr. Spong, one of the hardest, and hardest-working army doctors I have ■■■ met; and that is saying ■ good deal, for ■■■ of them ■■■ shirks, and ■ have met many. He asked ■■■ briefly where ■ had come from, and I told him from Fenwick, who seemed sick. He said he ■■■ going out to ■■■ him in ■■■■■ to ■ note from Pritchard, and on he went.

As this ■ one of the very hottest days ■ had, ■ halted half-way to have refreshment with the officers of the Second, and then rode ■ to give my note to Rundle about noon.

A lunch of bread, thin soup, and weak brandy and water, and ■ short snooze, took me on to three in the afternoon, when on going ■ rounds I heard that both Trask and Fenwick were dead. These were the first of our friends who went, and a great gloom was spread over the whole of the Kosheh force, though it was in ■ too cheerful spirits before. One of our ■ colleagues, Mr. Garrett, had been sent down to Halfa in ■ almost hopeless condition, and another, Atteridge, had broken down altogether and also left the field. We who were left, though, did ■ best to keep up our own spirits and those of our comrades in misfortune, and there ■ scarcely a night when the correspondents' tables ■ not graced with ■ few uniforms, and their camp did not echo to the sounds of the banjo and such songs as "Sweet Marie," "On the road to Dongola," "The Year of Jubilee," "Could I only be sure that nobody else," and many more.

On the whole ■ days ■ pretty well filled. The first duty in the morning ■ water fatigue, which ■ took in turn. This consisted in superintending the filling of all the waterskins for the day's needs. The "officer of the day" had to assemble the camels ■ about five, slung round with their *gerbehs*, and send them down to where the boats were moored. The boats also took it in turn to row out into midstream and fill the skins. Both the camel drivers and the sailors hated this job, but it was absolutely necessary to insist upon and see that the water was taken from far out.

When in camp all that for drinking purposes ■ first cleared with alum, or, equally well, with ■ handful of beans, and then boiled, and that for baths was merely cleared.

By seven o'clock breakfast would generally be finished and the rounds would begin—terminating at about ten, or half-past, usually in the Intelligence tent for ■ chat

with Colonel Wingate and Slatin, and to get the day's telegrams censored. A ■■■■ urbane and fair-minded Censor no correspondents ■■■■ had, and with the exception of the C.I.C. everybody with whom the Press was brought in contact on this campaign "did" them right well. In saying this about Sir H. Kitchener, I do not do so in any spiteful or malicious spirit,—nor would it affect him in the slightest if this were so,—but I merely put on record the fact that except actually when fighting was going on he treated us with very scant consideration and courtesy, and seemed to look ■■■■ us as perhaps necessary evils in the eyes of others, but in his ■■■■ simply as evils and quite unnecessary. ■■■■ daresay if a correspondent ■■■■ ■ General he would be of the ■■■■ way of thinking, but ■■■■ long as he is ■■■■ "special" he is apt to kick ■■■■ little against too much snubbing and restrictions.

Slatin Pasha was very popular with us, and I think was never happier than when he could escape from his official surroundings and pay ■■■■ a visit or dine with ■■■■ His good-humour and merry spirits ■■■■ seemed to fail him, and it ■■■■ difficult to believe that this ■■■■ the man who had been thirteen years a slave of the Mahdi, during several of which he had trotted beside his master's horse chained hand and foot. He used laughingly to say that he ■■■■ twenty-two or twenty-three years old, because the years of his captivity did not count in his life; and he certainly almost bore out the joke in his appearance. It was extraordinary, too, to ■■■■ how small were his feet and hands after walking barefoot for years and being employed in hard manual labour.

From the day we left Halfa until the end of the campaign there was hardly a morning that we did not spend ■■■■ hour or two in the Intelligence tent, so that it may be imagined how really warm ■■■■ friendship ■■■■ created between the correspondents and the Censor and his Pasha, not to mention several other members of that department, such as Smyth of the Bays and the Italian Attaché, Colonel Trombi. Amongst the company officers, too, ■■■■ had ■■■■ great chums—so many, in fact, that it

would be misleading to mention any in particular ; and there was, I think I may say, not a regimental or departmental where a correspondent could not almost consider himself an honorary member.

Our new camp lay between the Tenth Soudanese, which was the last out in the desert, and the Third Egyptian pitched slightly higher than were, with the cemetery below us. Farther on the Ninth Soudanese.

The Tenth was commanded by Colonel Sydney, since killed at Abu Hamed, with Prendergast as senior company officer ; Fitzclarence, also of the Tenth, and also killed at Abu Hamed, was then acting Provost Marshal. The Third was under " Jim " Sillem, who, though an excellent officer and good company enough when he chose, was not perhaps as fond of society as most of his brothers. The Ninth under Colonel Hackett Pain, generally known as the " Old Officer," with whom two youngsters, Ravenscroft and Hoskins, usually called the big and the little Binbash, smart juniors as you could find in any army. But I am already beginning to through of old friends and must stop, it would take too long.

When the cholera was the decrease I went down to Halfa for a day or two with Seppings Wright for a change of air and to eat a good meal in the mess. Our experiences on this little trip would make almost a chapter by themselves, especially quarantine at Akasheh ; but I only mention our having gone to show that we could sometimes get away for a short spell. It was about this season, the beginning of August, that extraordinary storms of dust and rain, such as had not been known for years in the Soudan, commenced with frequency and violence. Our *tukuls* were repeatedly blown down about our and all our belongings scattered over the desert or washed away down the nullahs to the Nile. They would generally begin with a succession of dust " devils "—then a tremendous gust or two of wind, a lull, and a low grey bank of cloud on the horizon, which, in less than five minutes sometimes, would be like a waterspout. In a quarter of an hour rivers a yard deep would be racing

down the hills and [redacted] the desert, and small lakes forming wherever the ground [redacted] flat or depressed. The misery to the camp of these storms cannot be described if it can be imagined, but there [redacted] generally the consolation of immediate fine weather succeeding—indeed the hurricane and rain seldom lasted more than an hour.

One of the worst of these was [redacted] Amara after the Gymkhana Meeting organised by Sparkes Bey and his cheery subs of the Fourth Egyptian Battalion. It was, by the bye, at this meeting that I certainly was in more danger of my life than at any previous [redacted] subsequent moment of the campaign. It was in the Bitchee-Watchee Race, in which the horse which [redacted] in last wins, and everybody rides [redacted] other gee than his [redacted]. As a rule the entries consist of the slowest old corks to be had. I entered my "Cow" with a certainty, which [redacted] not upset, of his coming in last, but Sparkes thought it would be [redacted] joke to enter what [redacted] known as his "Spunky Horse"—[redacted] runaway brute with no mouth, who [redacted] bad to ride at any time. As the race was [redacted] be ridden bareback and without whip, and the horses [redacted] to be led to the post and only mounted when the word "Go" [redacted] given, it [redacted] clear that whoever had "Spunky Horse" to pilot would have his work cut out for him. He fell to [redacted]. The others [redacted] already well [redacted] their way before I could climb [redacted] to his back, and then with a couple of prodigious bounds he started in pursuit. I need not attempt to describe the race nor my feelings of terror [redacted] I felt him start, [redacted] of relief when I succeeded at last in pulling him up. [redacted] would willingly have paid ten pounds, or more, not to have tried the experiment, but such is the foolishness of human nature that I was ashamed to confess that I should like somebody else to have that particular horse to ride. At anyrate, it all ended well. We had, too, [redacted] good steeplechasing all [redacted] by Colonel "Robert" Adams—now with [redacted] V.C. [redacted] in India, together with young Viscount Fincastle, who [redacted] his first shot fired also during this campaign in the first cavalry skirmish at Akasheh, directly after which he had [redacted] go home invalided. Camel-racing

■ another feature of this meeting, the principal event being a match between ■ of Gwynne's Kabbabish telegraph runners and the champion of the Camel Corps. Gwynne's man ■ ■ regular character, Gummah by name, and the most atrocious-looking ruffian ■ seen. He possessed a very fine camel, though, which few but himself would or could ride. The course was about half a mile. The Camel Corps ■ started off at a gallop, whilst Gummah kept his beast at the orthodox trot, rather than break which I believe he would have lost the race. The army champion jumped off with a slight lead but did not increase it, and when about half the distance had been completed he ran out of the course, leaving Gummah to finish alone.

We had ■ very festive dinner, I remember, followed by the usual "sing-song," lasting till ■ midnight. We had not undressed long, though, before a fearful and choking duststorm began, and then came such rain ■ ■ seldom sees, which lasted till sunrise instead of the usual half or full hour. Most of us, between the exertions of the gymkhana and the excitement of the big dinner, ■ considerably in want of the rest which ■ could not get through the storm, and it ■ ■ sorry show ■ made at early breakfast next morning. One of us ■ really too bad to sit on ■ horse, so I lent him my easy-going camel, on which I had ridden out, and myself took his nag back to Kosheh, where ■ arrived at about nine, to find half the place under water.

Altogether we stayed at Kosheh up to the 11th of September, the latter part of our sojourn being enlivened slightly by the advent of Captain Colville and his navy men, to put together the ■ gunboat, of which great things were expected. The Nile, too, rose fast, and it was getting ■ healthy, though not perceptibly cooler to any extent. Then ■ the order for the First Brigade to march ■ the desert to Suarda. This was always put down to the Sirdar ■ ■ of the grossest and most gratuitous mistakes of the campaign. The problem ■ to move from Kosheh towards Dongola, and the first place

where anything like ■ *dépôt* ■ formed ■ at Suarda ■ at Dulgo, ■ little farther south. It would have been comparatively easy and comfortable for the ■ to have kept along the banks of the river the whole way, where they would have had plenty of now clean fresh water and the benefit of shady camps ; but for reasons of his own, which we, at anyrate, could not discover at the time (nor have I ever done so since), Sir H. Kitchener decided on making a desert march to Dulgo, or rather to Absarat, with a water *dépôt* half-way out in the desert. This *dépôt* was formed and kept up with great labour by camel caravans taking out the water every other day, and the precious liquid was stored in large tin or zinc boxes lying out by the side of the track. Then the First Brigade went out in ■ pelting shower of rain at about four in the afternoon and soon found themselves obliged to wade ■ nullahs up to their knees. This ■ followed at night by ■ hot duststorm, and ■ very large number of the men fell out, many of them returning to camp and using language which would have possibly astonished the Sirdar, at having been sent out that way. I believe as a matter of fact more than ■ third of the brigade failed to reach Absarat next evening, and a good many were lost. My own recollection of that march is ■ of the most ghastly of the whole campaign. We left the old Kosheh camp, with its varied associations, good and evil, ■ about three ■ the afternoon of the 11th, being almost the last to do so, the whole of the army having been forwarded before we correspondents were allowed to move. It was quite a relief to turn our backs at last on the deserted waste of *tukuls*, only a few down at the *Nusul* being still inhabited. We had all sent our boats up before us, and rode camels or horses as the fancy took us. We reached the first water *dépôt* at about eight in the evening, after nearly losing ■ way several times, and ■ very hospitably received by Captain Tudway of the Camel Corps, who ■ in charge. The water, however, was ■ hot that it ■ painful even to the hands, and quite undrinkable until it had been cooled for at least an hour in bottles. It may be

imagined what the men must have felt on arriving thirsty
 ■ such ■ *dépôt*. We could not afford to rest very long, ■
 after ■ short sleep on the sand ■ ■ ■ off again soon
 after midnight, and reached the second water *dépôt* at
 about six in the morning, but not before we had picked
 up and rescued from certain death several stragglers from
 the last regiment, which had passed that way the day
 before—the last of these wretched men being watched
 hungrily by a vulture sitting by his side not a mile from
 the water. But all this was described at the time in the
 papers and pictured in the “illustrateds,” so that it would be
 superfluous to retell the tale. We camped at this second
dépôt till three,—at least two of my comrades, Pearce
 and Sheldon, did with me, the rest having pressed on
 earlier,—and took it comparatively easy in to Absarat,
 which ■ reached soon after seven, in time for dinner
 with Major Kitchener, the Sirdar’s brother, and Captains
 Sherrer and Gage of the friendly *hemleh*. The Sirdar
 himself was on board ■ of the gunboats moored a little
 higher up, and in the middle of dinner sent for his brother.
 When the Major returned we heard that an accident had
 happened to the *Zafir*, the new gunboat from which
 such great things ■ expected, and that she ■ not
 expected to take part in the attack on Dongola. This
 ■ a great blow to everybody, after the desperate hard
 work which had been expended ■ this object, and the
 Major said that he had never seen his brother ■ upset,
 and that nobody had even mentioned the subject. We
 slept at Absarat that day, and rode on to Dulgo on
 Sunday the 13th, finding the whole camp struck and the
 rearguard of the Ninth marching out as we trotted in
 ■ about five in the evening. All our colleagues had
 gone on, and Sheldon thought best to keep up with the
 army; but Pearce and I preferred to take ■ decent night’s
 rest, being confident of easily catching up the camp at
 Ferreig next evening. On the 19th ■ left Kabbodi
 before dawn, went, rather to our surprise, through Abu
 Fatmeh without a shot being fired, and occupied Kerma
 at 6.30. We could, however, ■ the enemy at Hafir ■

the opposite bank; so bringing up ■■■■ small field-guns ■■■■ commenced shelling them from our side, whilst two ■■■■ three gunboats performed the ■■■■ operation from the river. Whenever either of these tried, however, to pass the narrowest part of the stream, it met such a hot reception from one or two dervish guns and from the rifle pits along the shore that it was forced to retreat. There ■■■■ comparatively few dervishes visible, all that could be seen being the puffs of smoke from the pits and mud embra- ■■■■ Our fire dismounted their guns time after time, but with great coolness and adroitness they were always set up again with very short delay. This action of Hafir demonstrated most clearly the immense protective value of thick mud walls, into or through which the shells went, destroying perhaps a foot square but leaving the rest intact. I know that various estimates ■■■■ made, but my own ■■■■ that there were not more than four hundred dervishes fighting the Egyptian Army and gunboats at Hafir; and had it not been from a fear of the Egyptians getting ■■■■ their families higher up, when once the gunboats had succeeded in forcing the passage, ■■■■ believe these four hundred could have held the pits almost indefinitely. The Maxims alone fired four thousand rounds, and I forget how many shells were delivered from the shore and the steamers besides rifle fire; yet it is not ■■■■ all ■■■■ that any dervishes at all were killed, and it was ■■■■ claimed, I fancy, that their loss exceeded three or four.

The final passage of the narrow gut ■■■■ somewhat exciting, as an unlucky dervish shell at that short range—less than five hundred yards—would certainly have sunk any of the gunboats. Several of them went very close, and ■■■■ actually struck the water and ricocheted straight over the ship. It ■■■■ the rifles from the pits, however, which were the most dangerous, and it was by a bullet from these that Captain Colville ■■■■ hit in the wrist. The Sirdar and staff and the Press watched the Hafir fight for about four hours through their glasses as comfortably ■■■■ if from ■■■■ opera box, and ■■■■ felt when the gallant steamers ■■■■ once out of dervish range, that Dongola ■■■■ practically

■ This proved to be the case, and the clasp for "Hafir" instead of "Dongola" shows that it ■ there that the decisive action ■ fought. The next day ■ spent in the herculean task of ferrying the army ■ the Nile in full flood. This may not have been ■ very brilliant feat to watch, but in reality it ■ one of the finest pieces of work in a campaign which ■ conspicuous for such feats. On the 21st ■ ■ ready for the final move, and early on the morning of the 23rd the huge column moved out. By ten o'clock we were marching quietly through Wad Bishara's deserted Dehm, and soon after eleven ■ ■ in the old town of Dongola, and had once more raised the Egyptian flag over the ruined Government House. This ended the first chapter of the story of the recovery of the Soudan. At the time of writing these words—March 1898—we are daily expecting the news of a big fight, the last, probably, before the Armageddon at Omdurman, where the Khalifa may be expected, if ever, to make his final stand. I have only sketched very cursorily the barest outlines of the Dongola Expedition from a correspondent's point of view, since generally we of the Press are prohibited from taking our own standpoints, and I thought it might interest some of the public to hear how their news is provided for them. Even thus the chapter has exceeded its proper dimensions, and I refrain from any further observations or criticisms, military or political, ■ the Soudan ■ paigns past and proceeding and to come.

CHAPTER XII

AT the very beginning of 1897 it was tolerably clear to all who were watching with knowledge the [redacted] of events in Crete that matters would soon reach a crisis in that unhappy island. I myself had wished to go there in January, but various other matters combined to detain me until the town of Canea had been partially fired and the ships had bombarded the Akrotiri insurgents. We may later consider the historical and political aspect of the Cretan question, but for the present I will confine myself to describing my own personal experiences during six weeks [redacted] so preceding the declaration of war. As I have by [redacted] a brief diary kept [redacted] the time, I can scarcely do better than transcribe it, with such additions as recur to my memory as I write.

"1897—*February 25th*.—Reached Athens at 6.30 a.m. Transhipped luggage at [redacted] to the *Medea*, and then ashore. By the roundabout little railway up to town. To Hotel Grande Bretagne, where found Bouchier more or less directing the affairs of the nation. Also H. Norman similarly engaged. Dined [redacted] *table d'hôte*, where [redacted] Dimitroff the Bulgar, and Nobili. Back on board at 9.30. Cannot say that I was struck with any great display of excitement concerning the doings of Vassos or the fate of Crete."

"*February 27th*.—Got to Candia at dawn. At seven o'clock went to call on the *Trafalgar*, but Captain Grenfell already out. On shore to [redacted] Vice-Consul—a Greek with a great idea of his importance; perhaps, however, due as much to his wealth as to his position, he being reputed the richest [redacted] in Candia, if not in Crete. At his house [redacted] a bulbous-nosed secretary to Shefki Bey, the Governor. Town seems quiet enough, though only

five hundred Christians to forty thousand Moslems. Seems, however, that fighting had been going ■ the day before, and this ■ occasion Grenfell's visiting Governor.

"Before steamer left, old General of Division, Mustapha Pasha, came board to take Canea command. Reached Rethymo early in afternoon, but didn't go ashore. Left again about midnight."

"*February 28th.*—Canea at dawn. Very pretty as seen from the sea. All the background formed snow-covered heights, Ida chain. Ominous little wreaths smoke rising, however, all directions. Landed about nine o'clock without any usual bother Customs. First thing to do find Biliotti. He at ■ took me round to Cherm-side and Bor, who ■ at the Marine Guard. Cherm-side came here on military commission, which having proved completely abortive, he is ■ hoping to go back to Constantinople. Bor used to command Cyprus Police. Now been named head of Cretan, ■ rather Canean, gendarmerie. Had lunch ■ Marine Mess, and after some sort of food in our new house, which agreed to take together with Scudamore for ten napoleons a year, strolled out again to Bor's to have a whisky and soda."

The state of Canea would have been ludicrous had it not been deplorable. Ninety-five per cent. of the Christian inhabitants had fled, locking up such of their goods ■ they ■ unable to carry away with them in their houses. There ■ no hotels and no accommodation for strangers. What had once been *the* hotel had been annexed by several members of the Consular Corps and their relations, who had broken into it and established a sort of *table d'hôte* of their ■ there. As a rule, all these officials live out at Halepa, but were ordered in by the ships as soon as hostilities commenced in earnest. The only ■ who objected to move, and remained outside Canea, was the Austrian, Baron Pinta. Sir Alfred Biliotti and M. Medana, the Italian, with their wives, had exchanged their comfortable Halepa villas for ■ poky ■ each in the Consular Hotel, where also lived Colonel and

Madame Ruggieri, the Italian Military Attaché, and Mr. and Mrs. Giraud. The French Consul-General, ■■■ Blanc, lived in his consulate on the quay, ■■■ did the Russian, M. Demeric.

The British Consulate likewise ■■■ on the sea, next door to the Customs almost, but was a very rickety and disreputable old shanty, as, I regret to say, the foreign consulates of the lordly British Empire generally ■■■ in any ■■■ all out-of-the-way spot. The offices consisted of two very small and dusty rooms, with a few deal chairs and a couple of tables. A very dilapidated divan in Sir Alfred's den ■■■ visitors' accommodation. It was, however, convenient in ■■■■ ways, ■■■ through the back window ■■■ could communicate with the signal men, who ■■■■ always ■■■ duty on the roof of ■■■ adjacent ruin. Most of Sir Alfred's writing, however, was done in the ■■■■ ■■■ of the Consular Corps at the hotel, where they generally met at least once ■■■ day to discuss the situation. Of course the most pressing need for me was to find a lodging, and ■■■ Consul consigned me to one of his acquaintances, who showed ■■■ several very uninviting ■■■■ to be shared with other guests. In the course of ■■■ wanderings, though, I came across Scudamore, and ■■■ agreed to look ■■■ for ■■■ house for ourselves. Our *modus operandi* ■■■ simplicity itself. We first went on the quay, and asked any likely-looking individual ■■■ met if he did not know of ■■■ lodging, and then tried several of the principal streets in the ■■■■ way. In ■■■ very short while ■■■ had ■■■ large number to select from. The fact ■■■■ that the Christians were still suffering from panic, and dared not live in their own houses, which they ■■■■ in daily fear of seeing looted or burnt. Consequently they were only too glad to find a European willing ■■■ occupy, being tolerably sure that as long as he ■■■ there no harm would come to the property. None of them asked or wished to take any rent or equivalent; but we insisted ■■■ anyrate on paying something, if only nominal, which would establish our title in ■■■ of future ■■■■ tingenecies. The event proved that ■■■ had been wise in

generation, for as soon as the panic wore off the proprietor wished to join us in tenancy, and otherwise infringe rights; but declared that in undisputed and indisputable possession for a year, though of course knew that a couple of months at the outside was likely to be the limit of stay.

After the house the question of servants. Real servants, of course, there were none, but took on two cab-drivers out of work, and used them best we could. They naturally entirely ignorant of the ways of civilised life, but could do a certain amount of washing-up and fetching and carrying. A cook was beyond the dreams of avarice. We telegraphed both to Brindisi and Smyrna, offering ten pounds a month and passage both ways; but only one candidate would even bite at such an apparently tempting bait, and he changed his mind at the last moment. Our diet consequently soon reduced itself to a monotonous level. It consisted almost invariably of a leg or shoulder of mutton hot for dinner from the Turkish cook-shop, and cold for luncheon next day. Canean lambs are small, and there was never much, if any, left over. There no potatoes, so we had an invariable but good salad of fresh lettuce and spring onions, dressed with perhaps the finest olive oil in the world. Dessert consisted of a dish of "yaourt" clotted cream. Drink decidedly scarce, and beer very bad; but we generally contrived to supply ourselves with whisky from one of the ships. Our first night in the house anything but peaceful. The mansion belonged to a wealthy Greek who had prepared it for his bride. It furnished with some magnificence—large mirrors, a grand piano, table, and bed-linen galore, and everything requisite, down even to scented soaps, powder puffs, and curling-tongs. Whether the happy couple had inhabited it I know not. A few broken panes of glass, however, allowed free access for cats, hundreds, if not thousands, of which roaming homeless and starving in the deserted streets and on housetops; and of course as soon came in, cats, scenting food and life,

came in after ■■■ And the "gubs," as the night fiends may be called, ■ rarely ■■ numerous and so ferocious. Luckily, a most excellent powder, ■ sort of sawdust, ■■ on sale cheap, and I used to smother the whole of the bed and the surrounding floor with handfuls of this every night. We never succeeded, though, in thoroughly evicting these pests, in comparison with which the myriads of fleas sank into insignificance.

To return to events. "*March 1st.*—Morning up to Major Bor's office, where found gendarmes on strike for arrears of pay. On to Commission, where Cherm-side introduced me to Shereef ed Deen Pasha, also Osman Bey. Back to Consulate, where found deputation, Moslem notables, very much excited ■ news from Selino, where all Moslem inhabitants seem danger being massacred.

"Up again to Bor's private quarters on the Suda Bay road, where had lunch with him and Colonel Vialart, French Military Attaché."

"*Tuesday, March 2nd.*—Had lunch again with Cherm-side, and walked back with him to see Bor about the mutinied gendarmes."

What had happened was this. A certain number of the worst characters had incited the rest of the Albanian gendarmes to demand their arrears of pay, and to refuse to go ■ duty until they received them. They certainly had very considerable cause of complaint, many of them having been eighteen months without pay; but it ■■ not a moment when insubordination could be permitted. Bor had made them several offers of paying ■ portion now and the rest later on, and many of the ■■ would surely have accepted, but a few ruffians kept up the bad feeling. The day before they had refused to allow Suliman Bey, an Albanian himself and second in command under Bor, to leave the Konak, where he was still virtually ■ prisoner; and in view of the extremely serious position, Major Bor had reported to the Admirals, who had that morning held a council on the subject. The public feeling ■■ already sufficiently excited, and the ■■ of public order ■■ not ■■ satisfactory that insubordination amongst its supposed

guardians could be lightly viewed. After some discussion, the opinion of Major Bor prevailed, and ■ adopted—namely, that ■ last chance should be given to the men to accept the terms offered, and to trust the Government for better treatment in the future; and that if they refused, they should be forcibly disarmed and the ringleaders suitably punished. The means of executing this programme proposed by the Major was that detachments of the various international troops, marines, and sailors should quietly and unostentatiously be brought up to and surround the Konak, and, if necessary, proceed to the disarmament. It ■ scarcely to be expected that, in ■ of force becoming necessary, bloodshed could be avoided, but *carte blanche* ■ given by the Admirals. This was the subject of the after-luncheon conversation between Colonel Sir H. Chermiside and Major Bor. The former had, of course, no administrative official position at that time, and could only offer his opinions. Whatever they may have been, they could scarcely then have influenced matters, as the whole business was cut and dried. In saying this, however, I must only be taken to mean that the necessary orders had been given to the various commandants of troops to be at the Konak at 3.30, very few, if any, outsiders having any idea of what ■ intended. Indeed, of all the officials in Canea, I suppose Sir A. Biliotti, Colonel Chermiside, Colonel Ruggieri, Colonel Amoretti, and perhaps ■ couple of foreign gendarmerie officers, were all who knew anything of the proposed disarmament till within ten minutes of its being carried out. After the two soldiers had conferred, Colonel Chermiside went back to his work and the Major to the Konak, whither I accompanied him, together with Mr. Hogarth, the author of the *Wandering Scholar*, acting ■ ■ amateur journalist and temporary correspondent of the *Times*.

Altogether ■ spent about an hour upstairs in Bor's room, chatting, as far as ■ was concerned, most of the time with Suliman Bey, who, though he did not then know the proposed measure, was confident of soon

bringing the mutineers to [redacted]. Soon after three, Sir A. Biliotti and Colonel Viallart paid the Major a visit ; the former being in the secret, the latter not. As [redacted] they [redacted] gone, taking with them [redacted] or two other officials who happened to be in the Konak, the Major came into his office with Captain Churchill, and told Suliman Bey of the plan. It was very simple. They [redacted] both to go downstairs, where the men had just finished dinner, and again appeal to their better feelings once or twice. If their arguments failed, Major Bor was to advance on to the doorstep and pass his handkerchief [redacted] or twice over his moustache. Upon this the bluejackets were to surround the doorway and call on the gendarmes to lay down their arms. If they resisted, they [redacted] to be disarmed by force at the point of the bayonet. The foreign troops were instructed not to use firearms without the word of command. Major Bor and Suliman Bey, followed by Churchill, went first downstairs, followed by Hogarth and myself. The staircase led into a broad basement [redacted] about fifty [redacted] sixty feet long by perhaps twenty-five wide. It split into two as Eastern staircases generally do half-way, and each arm landed by the right and left walls. Off the hall opened four rooms used [redacted] refectories and dormitories. Both the hall and these rooms were [redacted] of refractory Albanians. The building [redacted] entered by a door, [redacted] leaf of which [redacted] always open, opposite the staircase.

When Hogarth and I had reached the last step [redacted] saw Bor and Suliman talking to some of the men, and I took out a sketch-book I had brought with me to try and jot down the [redacted]. Scarcely, however, had I begun, when Bor walked leisurely to the porch and outside, and the next moment [redacted] saw the Italian marines rushing up [redacted] the door. At the head of them, so to speak, [redacted] the Gendarmerie Lieutenant, Cravieri, who seized the gendarme who [redacted] standing sentinel at the door. At the [redacted] moment Captain Helström, commanding the Russian sailors, who followed the Italians, burst into the [redacted]. Upon this [redacted] of the Albanians sitting in the middle of

the hall jumped and fired his rifle, probably ■ Cravieri, and his shot ■ followed by another from one of his comrades. These ■ immediately replied to by the officers with their revolvers and ■ or two of the sailors nearest the door. The mutineers then fired another few rifles, and ■ regular volley answered them, echoed by shrieks and groans. By this time the whole hall was full of smoke, two men were down almost ■ our feet, we ■ covered with plaster from bullets which had struck the wall about our ears, and the position was far from pleasant. If the battle was to continue our post was untenable, being ■ more exposed to danger from the point blank fire of the international troops through the door opposite us, than from stray bullets from the gendarmes. At the same time, if the Albanians held out it seemed scarcely likely that the sailors would be able to get in for some time, and ■ should have fallen easy victims. In any case, another volley through the door ■ not an inviting prospect, and we retraced ■ steps upstairs, ■ bullet coming through the ceiling just in front of us; but we had not been two minutes in Bor's office when ■ could see all was over, and ■ went down again. The spectacle in the hall was ghastly enough in all conscience, being like ■ butcher's shop and reeking with the smell of blood and powder. The place was, however, very ■ cleared, all the rebellious police being led out between a file of the international troops, and told to throw down their arms before being made prisoners. The result of this absolutely necessary operation was most unfortunate, insomuch that Suliman Bey, who was equally liked by the Europeans and the Albanians, ■ the first to fall, and died in great agony in less than half an hour in one of the inner rooms. Three other gendarmes were killed and ■ or two wounded. Only ■ sailor was hit, in the hand. Of course hundreds of widely divergent opinions ■ expressed ■ this incident, both as to its causes, its expediency, and its results. There can, however, be little if any doubt that it was necessary to adopt stringent measures. The responsibility for the firing may be given

to the natural excitability of the Italian character, since orders ■■■ that the gendarmes were to be disarmed at the point of the bayonet. I heard the more phlegmatic Russians wondering why their Italian comrades had fired, and several of them answered my questions on the subject by saying, "We ■■■ fired a shot; we had orders not to." As to who shot Suliman Bey, everybody in Canea formed his ■■■ opinion. The generally circulated theory was that he was killed by one of his ■■■ ■■■. At anyrate he died, poor fellow, in the execution of his duty, and that is the best death for a soldier. Seeing that it was my third day in Crete, I thought that things looked promising. On standing again at the foot of the staircase, I could count eight bullet marks which must have passed all within ■ foot of some part of the anatomy of the pair of correspondents. I need scarcely say, however, that we did not get the Iron Cross for Valour awarded by King Humbert to several others, who, I believe, ■■■ never even inside the Konak. It was on this date (2nd March) that the Powers made their declaration of policy regarding Crete. *Pro memorid*, it may here be noted that in February Germany had stated that she ■■■ ready to back up any energetic measures which Europe might decide to take—the ■■■ energetic the better—to prevent the political brigandage evidently contemplated by Greece. To this England retorted that it ■■■ desirable to reassure Greece and the Greeks that under ■■ circumstances would Crete ever revert to the domination pure and simple of Turkey, and that the island ought to be made into a "privileged province." After an interchange of views, the following two formulæ ■■■ proposed by Russia and accepted by the Concert.

Number one.—In no case could Crete, *under present circumstances*, be annexed by Greece.

Number two.—Crete should be endowed by the Powers with a full autonomous régime.

How this has been carried out history will show, but it is worth noting in its proper place and date that such a declaration ■■■ made by the Concert.

"*Thursday, March 4th.*—After usual round, went to lunch with Demeric and officer from the *Grosiastsky*. Then had a passage on the Italian launch to interview the Greek Admiral, Sakhtouris, on the *Hydra*. First went on board the *Stromboli*, then to the two Russians—the *Posadnik* and the *Nicolai II*. On board with us was a Greek journalist delegated by the Greek Vice-Consul to carry confidential communications to the Admiral. He was very full of his own importance at first, but under stress of weather and reduced to a state of complete limpness long before reaching the *Hydra*. On board the latter I saw Sakhtouris, who, however, evidently viewed the correspondent of the *Standard* with some suspicion, especially as the Vice-Consular Delegate had first seen him." (My sentiments regarding Greek action in Crete already well known—in fact, out of about forty special correspondents for the British and European Press, I was at that time probably the only one who was—I will not say impartial, but not or less rabidly Hellenophil. Perhaps I should except Hogarth, whose sympathies were, I think, nevertheless certainly Grecian.) "After a colourless interview, I tumbled again into the cockle-boat launch and back to the *Nicolai*, where I was given another launch to take me to *Barfleur*. Tea with Captain Mann, and then taken ashore by pinnace from *Camperdown*. To Consulate to see Billotti. Writing telegrams. Cold dinner. Whisky and bed early."

"*March 5th.*—On going out at seven found Billotti had gone in middle of night to Selino Kastel on *Rodney*. Wired to Captain Custance asking if any objection my following him, and to Rees to ask if he could give a steamer. Appears the *Edith* expected afternoon. Afternoon French tourists arrived, together with Mr. Bernard Maimoun, a secret agent from Stamboul. Having nothing else to do, helped them to get Seems Maimoun has secret mission for Vassos from Yildiz. Did not appear altogether pleased being recognised, though perhaps not quite sure whether I

know him. Dined with Rees and slept, ■ rather did not sleep, in his room, ■ prey ■ the insect creation in great force till 5.30 a.m., when ■ arrived. Got up and went straight on board at once."

The foregoing needs ■ word or two of explanation. The situation ■ Selino was very serious, and the Moslem inhabitants ■ in imminent danger of complete extermination. Their position ■ causing much anxiety to their friends and relations, and had been the subject of much deliberation by the Admirals. Several proposals had been made for mediation by the Consuls, but these gentlemen did not all of them relish the task of acting as intermediaries. Sir Alfred Biliotti alone urged the necessity of prompt action. His Russian colleague, M. Demeric, would have gone with him, but his French one objected to do so. Finally, in one way or another, it was decided to send him by himself on the *Rodney*. When the Consular Corps awoke next morning and found that he had gone, there was the usual cry of *perfidie Albion*; but apart from the Russian, M. Demeric, who would have started at any moment, the others had ■ cause to complain, as they had already previously refused a joint action.

When I heard of the intended relief of Selino I calculated that ■ news would be likely to reach Canea for probably four days, and therefore if I could get ■ steamer for myself I might send ■ first wire ■ the second day back by my own steamer, and ■ the fourth day again return with special ■ gathered by myself ■ the spot. It ■ of course expensive, but the *Standard* ■ questions cost in such emergencies. On the 6th, accordingly, I weighed anchor at about five in the morning, and off ■ went. The *Edith* ■ ■ small coasting steamer of, I suppose, about four hundred tons, and directly ■ were fairly out at ■ ■ began to have rather ■ bad time, ■ it was blowing hard. As ■ ■ into Kissamo Bay, hugging the shore to escape the swell, ■ ■ overhauled by the *Scylla*. Twenty minutes before she ■ been barely visible ■ the horizon, but coming down at over twenty knots she ■ hove us to.

On finding there was nobody and nothing ■ board but ■ war correspondent she ■ very disgusted, and somewhat sulkily gave ■ leave to proceed on our course. By this time the seas ■ breaking over the deck, and most of the ■ ill. I took up my position on the bridge, well wedged amongst the rails, and insisted ■ continuing, although the captain already wanted to turn back. By noon ■ only approaching Cape Grabusa, when ■ had ■ cold chicken and ■ bottle of beer brought up for lunch, as it ■ unbearable below. I, and everybody else ■ deck, ■ well soaked through, and it ■ blowing half ■ gale. When ■ rounded the Cape, though, the ■ worse still, and after holding on for about ■ hour, and making less than half ■ mile, I reluctantly gave the word to go back. We could not possibly have fetched Selino till the next evening, if we did so at all, and that would have been too late. So we turned round, and I got into Canea at about ■ in the evening, figuratively with my tail between my legs, and not feeling very festive after thirteen hours spent on the bridge in bad weather. "After a hasty dinner glad to get to bed."

"*March 7th.*—Lunched at home. Dined with Rees. Attempt last night to blow up Turkish blockhouse. Great excitement, and Moslems threatening blow up Greek Consulate, which would not be bad thing. International ships all cleared out at sunset, being apparently afraid of being torpedoed by Prince George."

The blockhouse here alluded to was Malaxa, of which ■ anon. The Greek Consulate ■ almost next door to our own, and ■ a hotbed of intrigue and conspiracy of every imaginable kind. Not long after the Consul and his acolytes were forcibly expelled and the place shut up. The flight of the ships caused no little amusement and some jeering from the Græcophils. The new Admiral, Sakhtouris, ■ supposed to have come with some secret and mysterious instructions, and perhaps that may have influenced the Admirals. It was very clear, though, that they did not like the idea of torpedoes either from the *Hydra* ■ elsewhere, and that night Canea ■ left to itself.

"*March 9th.*—Morning took stroll round town and up to Chermiside, where met Hogarth, and ■ all walked up hill to Turkish battery overlooking Halepa, which was engaged in an active duel with ■ insurgents opposite. Lunched Hogarth, and with him board *Barfleur*. Dined at home, then round to Consular Hotel."

At this time desultory firing was going on during most part of every day both at Akrotiri and in the neighbourhood of Malaxa. This blockhouse ■ perched on the summit of ■ of the ridges overlooking the Suda road, and had ■ garrison of about forty men, who had now been more ■ less blockaded for a month past. Their principal need ■ water, but the last mule convoy which attempted to revictual them was turned back by the insurgents with the loss of one or two men. ■ remember the scene when these corpses were brought back along the Suda road, and met about half a mile outside the town by crowds of the townspeople, amongst whom were many women, who at once began "keening" and tearing their veils. I myself had returned from a visit to ■ of the ships, and had been saluted with a stray bullet or two, fired from nearly a mile off, several times along the route.

It was on this day (March 9th) that the Greek Vice-Consul and two or three correspondents of the Athens Press, who were thinly disguised agitators more than journalists, were expelled from Canea by order of the Admirals.

The next day, on the 10th, the *Trinacria* arrived with the first batch of refugees from Selino. Almost the whole town turned out on the quays to welcome them, a large proportion being either old friends or close relations. The weather ■ very rough, and the landing ■ a task of no small difficulty. It was performed entirely by foreign men-of-war's boats, and the sailors seemed rather to relish the care of the veiled Moslem ladies, in the agonies of sea-sickness ■

It ■ not till Thursday the 11th that Sir Alfred Billiotti himself ■ back ■ tell the tale of the ■ It ■ all old history now, but what ■ perhaps not

sufficiently shown at the time was the slenderness, so to speak, of the hair ■ which the lives of all concerned, not only the refugees but the relieving force, hung for several hours. The distance was at least fifteen miles from Selino to the sea, and the path was narrow, running between high hills on either side, lined with hundreds of insurgent riflemen. The little column had to march almost in Indian file, and would have been completely at the mercy of ■ attack. It ■ only owing, firstly, to the influence of Sir Alfred exercised on the leaders of the insurgents; and secondly, to his exertions, seconded by Mr. Bickford Smith, who happened to be ■ the spot ■ agent for the Relief Fund, in preventing any resistance or even show of resentment against the wholesale plunder that went on during the whole of the tramp down to the coast, that ■ ghastly massacre was averted. Afterwards Colonel Vassos claimed ■ merit which he had no shadow of a right to, for the ■ of the garrison, and the garrison, instead of being grateful for escaping with their lives, grumbled at having been robbed; but the real hero of the whole business was ■ venerable Consul. Of course the naval forces deserved great praise, but probably up to the present moment very few of those present have any idea how very near they several times were to their latter end, whereas Sir Alfred ■ perfectly cognisant of the danger, not only during its having to be faced but beforehand.

On the 14th our mess ■ joined by Mr. Bass, correspondent of the American *New York Journal*, an enterprising and determined colleague of the right sort. I spent most of this day cruising round the various ships in the harbour, having tea on the *Barfleur*, and dining in the wardroom of the Russian *Grosiastchy*, after which ended up the evening with a quiet game of poker at the quarters of Melton Prior, who had lately arrived and established himself in another house on the quay.

"*March 15th.*—Up rather later than usual. Spent hour reading and collating reports from Italian Vice-Consul ■ atrocities at Sitia and Daphnes. Wrote out telegram ■ same. Lunch at Consular *table d'hôte*.

Afterwards heard of disaster in gun turret of the *Sissoi Veliky*, but too late to go to Suda. Seems thirty killed and wounded. Dined with Russian Consul, Demeric. To Prior's for smoke and whisky."

On the 15th, after the usual rounds, I drove down to Suda with Prior, being rather too stiff to walk or ride. This arose from my having bestridden a fast and rough-going pacing pony a day or two before on a very ragged saddle with stirrup irons which must have been made for a child, and which would not admit of my wide-welted soles. Consequently I had to do without the leathers, and lost plenty of skin in consequence, besides being jolted to death. On the *Sissoi Veliky* were of received with the usual courtesy, which I have always found extended by Russians Englishmen; and not only were we shown the whole ship, but Melton Prior allowed to sketch the scene of the accident, and anything else which he wanted.

The Wednesday fixed for the funeral of the victims, and the gunboat *Grosiastsky* was put at the disposal of any distinguished foreigners who wished to attend. As there was plenty of wind most people elected to drive, many could secure carriages, of which the supply was still very limited; but the rest had to go by sea, and stand the roll and the swell best they could. The ceremony was very imposing, taking place in a little cemetery bought and established by Sir A. Biliotti, close to the shore of Suda Bay. All the representatives, naval, military, and consular, of the six Great Powers and Turkey, together with local notables, were there in uniform and their own costumes, and the scene, both on board the *Sissoi Veliky*, where the eighteen coffins were arranged, covered with flower wreaths and crosses, and on the brink of the big trench dug to receive them all, was most impressive and unique. As we were leaving the ground, Captain Robertson of the *Revenge*, whom I had last two days before entered Dongola, far up the Nile, asked several of us to lunch the flagship, where spent the rest of the afternoon in talking over old times

in Egypt, agreeing, I think, that, had ■ was, Crete ■ on the whole preferable to the Soudan.

The next three ■ four days were fairly quiet in Canea, the principal interest being centred in whether ■ no Turkey ■ going to war with Greece. When I arrived in Crete I found that ■ were quite destitute of any ■ from the outside world, except such ■ was afforded perhaps once ■ week by the arrival of the Austrian Lloyd steamer with the post. As it was almost necessary, for ■ at least, to know what was going on, I organised ■ private telegraphic service with Athens, by which I ■ to receive ■ items of the news of the world every day, and in return I sent Cretan news, which was equally welcome at Athens. I arranged for several Consuls and other officials to share the expenses, which, of course, were rather heavy, and this little system ■ continued ■ long as I remained on the island, to the great advantage of everybody concerned, though when it came to paying, I only encashed, I think, four pounds towards defraying the cost. It was, however, well worth my while, as I have always found that the best way to get news is to give it, and when you are known to be in possession of "the latest" you are always welcome, and stand ■ good chance of learning in return everything that there is to be given.

Things ■ already getting very mixed in Thessaly, and Scudamore left on the 19th, so that Bass and I ■ the remaining tenants of our lordly mansion, and most of the time I was alone, as Bass was for several days of every week up in the mountains ■ in the camp of Vassos, whither I did not care to accompany him, firstly, because I had plenty ■ do in Canea, and secondly, because I did not care to be under even the smallest obligations of hospitality to the leader of a party whose action I had consistently blamed, and which ■ daily offending against all my ideas of decency and right.

In the third week in March, Sir A. Biliotti and ■ of the other Consuls and residents ventured to reoccupy their villas in Halepa, and the Consular Hotel ■ broken up, and became the headquarters later ■ of some of the

Italian regiments. The condition of the village of Halepa would have been extremely comical had it not really been rather heartbreaking for the proprietors of houses and property there. Most of these had been turned inside out and looted, and even in Sir Alfred's garden a good deal of havoc had been made, whilst mournful sounds proceeded from a ■■■ where two favourite cats had been tied up in a sack and left to starve unsuccessfully, their feline tenacity of life having enabled them to hold on till our arrival.

From this time onward, whenever I ■■■ in supposed residence at Canea, most of my time ■■■ spent either out at Halepa ■■ at Suda, where the hospitable wardroom of the *Revenge* ■■■ always open, and gave ■■■ a welcome decent meal ■■■ change from mutton and onions, not to speak of the best of good company, and, if I could manage to stay, ■ cot slung between decks, where, at anyrate, I ■■■ for ■■■ night able to sleep without fear of indefatigable bloodthirsty enemies. Now and again Admiral Harris would invite me to his table, but then I had to borrow kit all round, not having provided myself on leaving Constantinople with the garments of evening civilisation, whereas in the wardroom I ■■■ always made thoroughly welcome at any hour, and almost in any costume—a way they have in the army, and ■ way they have in the navy—at least so it has always been my good luck to find.

On the 24th March the *Seaforths* arrived ■ Canea, and having applied to Admiral Harris, I had no difficulty in getting ■ free passage on the *Clyde* transport, to accompany the regiment to Candia. In some respects it ■■■ fancied to be rather a ticklish experiment to land a European force at this spot, where almost if not half the original Moslem population of the island was then assembled; but the disembarkation ■■■ off all right, although there certainly was ■ critical moment, ■ rather about five critical minutes, when the first boatloads of the Highlanders reached the quays, and the population ■■■ not quite ■■■ if, judging by the dress, they were not ■■■ breed of Greeks in coloured petticoats, instead of the

usual white *fustanella*. Having spent the whole of the day in watching the landing of the regiment and rowing to and fro from the ship, ■ finally put ■ shore about twelve dozen of stout and soda and ■ great ham, all of which were great prizes in Crete, and betook myself to the Consulate, where M. Calocherino lent ■ a bed in ■ of his offices, in which I curled up, and was ■ asleep, notwithstanding the repeated assaults of both light infantry and "heavies," whose marks ■ bore for days afterwards.

After ■ very early breakfast I ■ down by the ■ next morning in time to see the Highlanders parade for inspection, by Shesky Bey, the Commandant of Turkish troops, whose garrison band then played our men through the town to their quarters just outside the ramparts. This was all over by about nine, after which ■ Dr. Ittar offered to take me to visit some of the refugees from Sitia and Daphnes, of whom ■ had already heard a good deal in Canea, and to see and interrogate whom personally ■ of the chief objects of my coming to Candia. As most of these were Moslem women, it would not have been very easy to obtain ■ to them without the help of a doctor, but passing myself off as another of the fraternity no difficulties were made. The visits to these poor creatures took us up to nearly two o'clock. It would be useless ■ to repeat the stories they told, the most interesting of which I spent the afternoon in writing out for publication in the *Standard*, where they duly appeared—at least ■ of them—later on. One could not but be struck with the great beauty of the women and children, ■ well as with their patient resignation, only one of them seeming really to feel any strong resentment against their enemies. The Cretans are, in fact, ■ accustomed to violence that acts of brutality are looked upon ■ nothing at all out of the common, even when perpetrated ■ defenceless girls and babies. The good looks of these people, in contrast to the far plainer Christian folk, must probably be put down to ■ fact that the Moslems, having for several generations been the dominant race, have been in the habit of not being ■ particular in the matter of

helping themselves to the handsomest maidens for wives, and the children following the fathers' examples, all the grace and beauty of Crete almost has gravitated into Moslem circles. At least this is what struck me, not only at Candia, but wherever one had a chance of seeing the Moslem women. The Selino refugees, for instance, were again examples of this.

When all my investigations were over, I repaired again to the Consulate for lunch, where I found Colonel Sir H. Chermiside and Sir Alfred very busy making arrangements for the comfort of the British garrison. After finishing my writing I went out to the bazaars to see if I could find anything worth buying. In Canea there was absolutely nothing except trash, the Cretan knives which were offered being without exception quite modern. Here, however, on this and a subsequent visit, when I accompanied the Welsh Fusiliers also to Candia later, I was able to pick up some respectable silver and gold, though very little of the latter—only two strings of the beautiful old filigree beads for which Crete was famous, and some pretty little gold chains. I was fortunate enough, though, to come away with two very fine knives, or rather knives in very good *repoussé*, and carved silver sheaths made more than a hundred years ago by a celebrated craftsman who had both signed and dated them. There was another knife by the same hand in the island, but the owner would not part with it.

When I reached Canea again on the 28th, I found that Malaxa had fallen, and that my fellow-lodger, Bass, had just returned from the scene a few hours before myself, so that he was able to give me a most graphic account of all that happened. Again I shall refrain from telling an already oft-told tale, merely remarking that it was the foreign shells, intended to turn the insurgents out of the fort, which finally sent the wretched Turkish garrison flying out of it, and that had it not been for the presence of the American correspondent, Bass, the Turks would probably have been massacred to a man by the insurgents under their Greek officers.

The incident from beginning to end ■■■ most unfortunate, and whilst the Turks considered that both the loss of life and the shame of the surrender lay at the doors of Europe, the insurgents, elated with success, lost any little respect they may ever have had for the international fleet and its guns, and proceeded at once to demolish all the other blockhouses and forts between Soobashi and Izzeddin; the former being the extreme western one of the Canea defences, and the latter the eastern, ■■■ Suda Bay. They even threatened the fairly powerful position at Izzeddin itself, and advanced against it in such a determined fashion that the Admirals decided to shell them out of their posts if they continued to push them on. It ■■■ also settled that Major Bor should garrison Izzeddin, and happening to be on board the *Revenge* on the afternoon of the 30th, I was informed of these various decisions. Foreseeing that there ■■■ every probability of another bombardment, next morning I was up betimes, and by eight o'clock ■■■ ■■■ Suda Bay. Here I found that the firing had already begun, ■■ with some difficulty persuading ■ a boatman to take me off, I started for Izzeddin. In less than an hour I ■■■ close up to the fort and amongst the bombarding ships, which, if ■ remember rightly, ■■■ the *Ardent*, the Russian *Grosiastsky*, the Austrian *Tiger*, and the Turkish frigate. The latter did not do much execution, and the *Ardent* ■■■ not ■ very busy after the first half-hour; but the Russian kept banging away pertinaciously and making very good practice, whilst now and again the *Tiger* ranged up and let them have ■ round or two from her heavier guns. The artillery, however, seemed to have very little effect on the rebels, who held their ground manfully under a very hot cannonade from these ships for ■■■ two hours, not to mention the Turkish rifle fire and the volleys of the fort ordnance. It is true that the ground ■■■ very broken and rocky, and ■ Cretan ■■■ shelter himself almost as neatly ■ ■ hare behind ■■■ a tuft ■ two of grass; so that, though the shells looked very formidable, they did very little, and failed entirely to subdue the attack. Suddenly, however, ■ distant roar ■■■ heard, followed by ■

ear-splitting crack, echoed backwards and forwards from Akrotiri to the mainland mountains, and the *Camperdown* opened with her 13-inch from her moorings four and a half miles away in the bay. Probably the landlocked lie of the ship lent additional force to the report of the big gun and the explosion of the shell, for though I have heard heavier metal I never remember anything like the din of the *Camperdown* shells. The effect on the insurgents, too, ■■■ instantaneous. We afterwards heard that nobody was actually killed, although the shots seemed to fall right "into the town," but a temporary panic ■■■ set up, and a general ■■■ *qui peut* followed, encouraged by which the Turks sallied out and drove the last of the insurgents over the crest of the hill. It was ■■■ of the prettiest little pieces of target practice and skirmishing anybody could wish to see, but after all ■ was not *la guerre*—in fact, the Cretans, though they would probably be very astonished and indignant if told so, have ■ idea of what fighting means beyond lurking behind rocks, if possible at least five hundred yards away from the enemy, and firing ■ many cartridges as they can, trusting to luck to hit somebody or something. ■ doubt if you could find fifty Cretans in the island who would cross quarter of a mile of open under fire of regular troops, and this accounts for the happily small loss of life during the perpetual fusilades which went on for months outside Canea, Candia, and Rethymo.

"April 2nd.—Morning round to Demeric, then Rees, and off in boat to the *Anson*, where lunched with Captain Mann. At five o'clock drove out to Suda. Dined *Revenge*, and had long talk with the Admiral on unsatisfactory state of affairs. Poker in the smoking-room, and my cot outside Bor's cabin."

The next morning (the 3rd), as soon ■ we went up on deck we noticed ■ extraordinary influx of Moslems from Halepa and Canea, all flocking towards Akrotiri in dozens with donkeys and mules. They crossed the neutral zone without the slightest hesitation, and proceeded straight on towards the first insurgent positions. The Akrotiriots, ■ the other hand, ■ also began to ■■ out like ants.

We could not conceive what was the meaning of this, as they could scarcely mean to engage in a pitched battle deliberately under the guns of the whole fleet at a range of not more than half a mile, besides which, the Moslems were scrambling along "anyhow," and not at all in Cretan guerilla fashion. The Admiral then decided to send Major Bor and Flag-Lieutenant Buller on shore to inquire what had happened, and to use every effort to prevent bloodshed. Owing, however, to the compact for concerted action, these officers could not go alone, but had to wait until some colleague from one of the other ships could join them. At last they started, but before they even reached the shore the leading Moslems had been halted by a dozen or so of the insurgents. A very friendly parley ensued, two of the men kissing each other, and they separated; but hardly had they done so when two of the Moslems fell, shot down by the insurgents almost at the muzzle of the rifle. All this could be seen quite plainly through the telescopes. Instantly everybody collapsed behind rocks and cover, and a fusillade of the usual sort began. Meanwhile, Bor and Buller could be made out scrambling as quickly as they could up the hillside, the latter having rather a hard time of it to keep up with the lengthy-limbed Major. The foreign colleague, when the firing had fairly begun and the bullets were whistling freely, considered his mission at an end, and waited below for the return of the Britishers. The first of the combatants met were Moslems, who were very indignant at what they termed, not without appearance of reason, though there is arriving at truth with these arch liars, the gross treachery of the insurgents, which they declared they would punish as it merited. On reaching a group of Christians, the emissaries met with no better success. Both insurgents and Bashi Bozooks declared that the Admirals might fire upon them as much as they pleased, but they intended to fight it out. Whilst this was going on ashore, the *Revenge* had signalled through an intermediate station in to Canea to know how it all had come about, and the ship was returned that

it had been rumoured that Akrotiri insurgents were to evacuate the peninsula that morning, and consequently the Moslems had come out to plunder them, Cretico, just as their own friends had been robbed when clearing out from Selino. No attempt had been made by the authorities to stop the outward sally of the Bashi Bozooks, and Admiral Harris, whose ship nearest to the scene of action, on the point of sending a shell two amongst the crowd when it remembered that nothing could be done except "in concert," and a council was hastily summoned on board the French ship. Here it decided to shell the Moslems. The insurgents had hitherto had the entire benefit of foreign fire except at Malaxa, where it was also intended for them, and it thought that it might be a very good thing to show impartiality by giving the Moslems a shell or two. Accordingly a gun was trained on the thickest cluster, and in another moment a melinite bomb would have been in the middle of it, had not a sailor, looking through strong glasses, shouted to stop just as the gunner was pulling the detonator. He had luckily discovered the two British officers in the centre of this particular batch of Bashi Bozooks. It was Bor's last attempt at parley, and no sooner had he left them and commenced his return journey than the battle began in earnest. As I have already said, a Cretan battle is something like a game of hide-and-seek, and in a minute or two there nobody to shell with any certainty of inflicting more damage side than another—in fact, very little chance of doing any damage at all. We amused ourselves with watching this fight for time; but there is not much to see, except puffs of smoke, in these skirmishes, and an hour or two of it is enough for the spectators, though the Cretans enjoy firing to their last round. This "battle" went till sunset, and particularly fatal owing to the proximity (quite accidental) of the combatants when it began. I believe eight Moslems and four Christians were put *hors de combat* this occasion—the heaviest bill in the whole course of the insurrection

—at an expenditure of perhaps ten thousand rounds of ammunition.

I do not know that anything else happened of sufficient interest to need recording during the remainder of my stay in Crete and up to the time of the outbreak of the ■■■ in the middle of April. A sort of attempt was made to disarm the Bashi Bozooks, but it ■■■ really only ■ farce, as altogether, ■ far as I could learn, only about two hundred rifles ■■■ given in, and every day I used to meet these gentry sneaking along the cactus hedges ■ skulking amongst the gardens and olive groves whenever I rode ■ walked outside the gates. And since then, just ■ year ago from the date on which I am writing these words, no sensible progress seems to have been made towards establishing order. If the skirmishing is not quite so frequent, not to say chronic, as it used to be, the reason probably is only that the natives are beginning to grow tired of it. Whenever he wants to do so there is nothing to hinder any Moslem or Cretan insurgent going out to stalk his enemy, and very few days pass without mention being made in Canea and Candia telegrams of what is now called "murder" instead of "an action" between the rivals, as it used to be styled in the beginning. Attempts to arrange something like friendly commercial intercourse ■ the island have hitherto failed ignominiously, and each Power girds at the impotence of the other and finds fault with the methods suggested ■ employed in turn by British, French, Austrian, Russian, or Italian. The temporary administration of Colonel Sir H. Chermiside in Candia, as being by far the most important centre at present, is the largest target for especial malice, but it is not too much to say that almost the only strictures passed ■ the conduct of affairs in Candia, and the principal difficulties in connection therewith, proceed from representatives of other members of the vaunted Concert, and ■ from either Moslems ■ Christians of the place. At the ■ time it must be admitted that both of these parties have every ■ to be dissatisfied both with what has and has not been done, as likewise with most of the proposals put forward for the future.

The Russian demand for the installation of Prince George of Greece was a singularly infelicitous stroke. Had such a proposal been made and enforced before even during the war it would have been an act of open injustice and violence towards the Sultan, but coming after the events in Thessaly it became an insult and an outrage to every Turk in the empire. It was also in many senses opposed to the principles of the Concert, which had begun by laying down the axiom that in any case should Crete revert to Greece, then declared that she should have a full autonomy with equal rights secured for both Moslems and Christians, and thirdly, decided that no member of any reigning European dynasty could be considered eligible for the post of Governor-General. For months nothing was heard but official utterances by responsible Ministers over half Europe, and a chorus in the public Press concerning the perfect accord and unanimity of the Concert regarded Crete. Nevertheless, one or more Powers always objected to every successive candidate brought up, and at last Russia, without mentioning her intention to any of her fellow-members, coolly informed the Sultan that she considered the enthronement of Prince George—there is no other word for it—would be the only way of settling the Cretan difficulty. It soon leaked out that in the early summer of 1897 this idea had been started by Russia, who had, in fact, never for an instant abandoned it, but while pretending to share the views of the other five Powers in Concert, had only remained in it so as to prevent its arriving at any result other than the one which she had already determined. Germany very quickly dissociated herself from any further interference in Crete, and her example has now been followed by Austria and Italy. Consequently England is left, in company with the Dual Alliance, to deal with Crete. In any ways this is a sensible enough arrangement, seeing that these three Powers are guaranteeing the Greek Loan and have always been traditionally associated in disentangling the knots into which Greece ties herself. It is unfortunate, though, that they have fallen into action, so to speak, more or less

bound by the past of the Concert, and England especially is at ■ great disadvantage *vis-à-vis* ■ solid pair of slightly disguised political enemies—at anyrate ■ couple who in Eastern questions are always hostilely jealous of Britain.

As soon as the Greek Prince was proposed the Sultan made his very natural protest, and the candidature ■■ for the time being “dropped,” though not “abandoned.” This is ■■ of Russia's favourite devices, and the game she has played ■ long with the ■■■■ of the War Indemnity is now being emphasised and repeated by the holding in suspense of the candidature of Prince George for Crete, and also of trouble in the Balkans through Bulgaria. The reason for the “dropping” ■■ the sudden awakening to the fact that the Turkish army was still in Thessaly, and it might be difficult to make it move out should the Sultan take it into his head to hold Thessaly instead of Crete. For the Turkish argument was that the appointment of Prince George would be no autonomy but simply ■ annexation to Greece in a thinly-veiled shape: therefore if forced upon them they would be justified in retaining the territory they occupied. As nobody felt equal to the task of tackling Edhem Pasha, the Russian proposal was simply pigeon-holed for a while.

As for any alternative, ■■■■ seemed to be forthcoming. The Powers made several very futile and foolish remarks to each other, the general gist of which seems to have been: “The Cretans seem to be getting ■ all right; we had better leave them alone. Some fine day they will probably have another set-to, and either exterminate each other totally, ■ else the Christians will gain their independence.”

In fact, there is no doubt that when ■■■■ the Concert of Europe discovered its impotency to satisfy the islanders, and to establish the boasted autonomy, it argued with itself thus: “There ■■ only ■ certain number of Turkish troops ■ the island, and we shall never let any more be landed. These troops, together with the Moslems, are only kept from starvation by food sent from outside, since the Christians ■■ in possession of all the interior

and productive part of Crete. In the [redacted] of events the garrisons and the population will get thinned off by death, emigration, desertion, etc., and [redacted] fine day the Christians will rise again and finish with the Moslems. And that is what [redacted] all want to see."

It would certainly have been more honest, not to say honourable, if the Concert had said openly what [redacted] whispered to itself, instead of professing to the Sultan that it wished to establish an autonomy and safeguard his suzerainty. But diplomacy, I regret to say, from my experience of it, is governed by different codes of honour than those which apply to individuals, and if the diplomacy of one Power is often crooked, what [redacted] be expected of the hashed-up policy of six?

Very likely before these lines [redacted] published [redacted] sort of a Governor will have been smuggled into Crete without asking the Sultan, and established there "quite temporarily." He will probably be a nonentity, and the Chambers and demagogues will [redacted] get the upper hand. He may, however, be a strong man, and succeed in partially reconstructing order, in which case his temporary nomination would almost certainly be confirmed for [redacted] term of years. In either case the result will inevitably be the quick or slow elimination of the Moslem element, which is altogether doomed in Crete. In [redacted] respects this is [redacted] pity, though if the island [redacted] to change into the hands of a European Power, it would be a matter for nothing but congratulation.

The Turkish rule in Crete has been far better than in most of its provinces, but of [redacted] it is always a wretched parody of government. To change it for British or Russian—or even French, perhaps—would be [redacted] godsend to the inhabitants. It may be doubted, however, if they will find Greek discipline much better than Turkish. Under the Porte half the island [redacted] really independent, especially the province of Sphakia, which [redacted] entirely so, and levied its [redacted] customs and elected its own officials, in return for a small annual tribute which it [redacted] supposed to pay but [redacted] did.

When the *ineluctabile tempus* comes, and Crete is annexed to Greece, it will, of course, become the happy hunting-ground of all the favoured officials, as well ■ ■ fruitful field for intriguers of all breeds and the sham politicians of whom Greece is ■ prolific. The gay Cretan will have to serve his time in the army, and submit to such discipline as is there enforced, instead of stalking his foes and wreaking his vendettas at his ■ sweet will, and his trades and produce will be taxed with a vigour unknown in the easy-going days of Ahmed and Selim. On the other hand, there will probably be ■ tough little group of about ■ score of Cretan Deputies, who will be able to turn the scale at any Parliamentary crisis, and who will consequently rule at Athens, and through Athens Greece.

They will, however, be elected, as ■ rule, from amongst noisy Athenians, and though they will enjoy the position afforded them by a Grecian Crete, I fancy the real Cretans will very soon grow sick of Greece, sicker even than they ■ of Turkey. Some of the most sensible Cretans themselves said to me when speaking of the future: "What we want is a strong and just Government. If we were 'united' to Greece—in other words, annexed by her—to-morrow, I would give two years as the utmost limit to which we might go without breaking out into insurrection again." The truth is that the Cretans ■ utter savages, brooking ■ authority willingly. As they rebelled against the Turks ■ will they rebel against the Greeks, or against each other, if they ■ autonomous. It is only the gradual contact with ■ better civilisation that will ever bring quiet into Crete—perhaps in another fifty or eighty years, but ■ doubt if sooner.

CHAPTER XIII

IT was in 1895 that I found myself back again in the Sultan's capital—on the dear old Bosphorus, where I am now penning these random recollections. There I discovered, curiously enough, most of the ■■■■ batch of youngsters of whom I had once been ■ member. Sir Edgar Vincent, who had passed the ■■■■ Student Interpreter Examination with myself, ■■■■ Director-General of the Ottoman Bank, and, in ■ fashion, leader of society; Block was First Dragoman, and really though not ostensibly one of the most influential of the diplomatic corps, owing to his popularity and intimate acquaintance with everybody and everything Turkish; Richards happened to be there on his way to Damascus after his Djeddah adventure, and Alvarez was on leave from Benghazi. Later on, Eyres, the cheeriest and most school-boyish of us all, came to take over the duties of British Consul, and it made one feel twenty years younger to meet again all the chums of one's early days. After my long spell of comparative inactivity in Russia, I had to buckle to in earnest as ■■■■ as I got into harness, for the Armenian question ■■■■ just then coming to a head—or what ■■■■ supposed to be a head, though it ■■■■ very deliberately and successfully decapitated by Yildiz. On my way back from Russia I stayed ■ fortnight in Sofia by the courteous permission of Mr. Mudford, who ■■■■ refused me anything at all in reason, in order to collate material for my biography of Stamboloff. The whole of this time ■■■■ spent in company with the massacred statesman, who gave me about four or five hours a day, during which we would sit in his study, and he would spin out the story of his life for me, to note down as rapidly ■ I could. He knew perfectly well that there

was no time to lose, and was ■■ anxious that a record of ■■ life's work should be kept, though he frequently remarked that he doubted ■■ seeing it in print. When I ■■ in Sofia, Mr. Henry Norman also happened to be there, and gave ■■ ■■ very handy little penny notebooks, in which I used to jot down the whole of Stamboloff's story. In doing so I used some special pens made in Bulgaria, stamped with ■ small bust of the Premier,—the best pens I ever wrote with,—and an aniline red ink. I remember when Stamboloff offered me the inkstand he half jokingly remarked that the colour ■■ appropriate, for his career had always been more or less writ in blood, and would certainly end in scarlet. I fancy we neither of us actually realised how true ■■ his words. Of course when first I reached Constantinople I had too much journalistic work to do to permit of my commencing the book, which ■■ only due by midsummer, and it ■■ not until I was fairly established at the Summer Palace at Therapia that I began writing it. I used to hear from Stamboloff almost every week at that period, he writing to me in Russian, as being more familiar to him than French, ■ far as correspondence went, though he spoke the latter language most fluently and picturesquely—but having been brought up at Odessa, his Russian was ■■■■ correct and grammatical. I remember taking the first page of the Preface under my hand ■ the 1st of June, and writing Finis ■ the 18th, but before the last proofs could ■■■■ back through the post all Europe ■■ electrified by the news of the assassination. I hurriedly scribbled ■ postscript that afternoon, and left the next day for Sofia. It is not worth while ■■ to recapitulate the disgraceful comedy which followed the tragedy. I sent ■■ accounts at the time to the *Standard*, but in messages forwarded by wire for the general public one cannot give ■■■■ than a tithe of the full truth. Nothing could have been ■■■■ pathetic than my interview with Madame Stamboloff and her account of the closing hours of her husband's life. No novelist could ■■ conceive, I fancy, ■ more human and cruel moment than that when

Stamboloff felt himself going, and lay there with his hands amputated and his eyes bandaged. The doctors had insisted ■ quiet and darkness, and his wife sat beside him. "Take off the handkerchief, Polyxena," he said. She whispered that it must not be. But he ■ accustomed to be obeyed, and repeated, "Take it off—I want to see the world ■ more." For him the world ■ a face, and the walls of his room—but it ■ all that he could ever hope to ■ again of "the world." It ■ Stamboloff all over; the last words he ■ spoke.

As I have said, it ■ up ■ the Summer Palace that I wrote my first book. Fashion has decreed that in Constantinople everybody shall spend the ■ months away from their own houses in Pera. Some go to Therapia, some to Buyukdereh, some to San Stefano, others again to Candilli, Moda, or the Prince's Islands. Of all these resorts Therapia is the most lively, owing to the presence there of the British, French, German, and Italian Embassies with their *stationnaires*, not to mention the big Summer Palace Hotel, and the smaller but perhaps more comfortable Petala's. At the next station north, ■ the Bosphorus, is Buyukdereh, where are the Austrian and Russian Embassies—about half ■ hour's drive, or row in a caique, from Therapia. The Austrians have a new Embassy at Yenikeui, but as long ■ Baron Calice remains it has not much chance of being occupied. Buyukdereh has a much finer quay than Therapia, but its hotels ■ uncomfortable, and except ■ few regular residents and the staff of the two Embassies, it is not much patronised. Candilli is about half-way between town and the two Upper Bosphorus resorts, and is favoured by several old inhabitants who prefer comparative quiet with coolness and their ■ society. Moda and Cadikeui are not much used by outsiders, but ■ the headquarters of the principal English and many of the best foreign families. They lie ■ the eastern entrance ■ the Marmora, just outside Leander's Tower, but cannot compete with the Bosphorus for freshness, the heat being very oppressive after the month of July. The same applies to the Islands, which

perfectly delightful up to June, after which the houses there are almost hot in Pera, though, of course, the air is cleaner and sweeter from the

As probably English readers have either a very small, very false, idea of life in Constantinople, I may be pardoned for entering into some little details not generally given in guide-books. To begin with, I will attempt to describe Therapia. Imagine a tumble-down little village built of wooden houses straggling up the sides of two or three hills. It is reached from town, and its inhabitants reach town by a service of steamers, running an average about every hour, and taking about an hour on the journey. If you are "a family," you can hire a house, either furnished at a big rental, or unfurnished pretty cheap. Very few people, however, do this, as they have infinite worries with servants and marketing, and are, moreover, devoured by mosquitoes, which reign supreme everywhere off the sea front. The few houses on the quay, besides the hotels, are private, so that it is usually easier to patronise the latter. Of these there are two, the Summer Palace and Petala's. I certainly do not intend to especially praise or disparage either, as I have been very comfortable in both. They are, however, quite different, and everybody can choose for himself. Petala's lies next the *scala*, which is a certain advantage, since one can always see the steamer coming and going, and also amuse oneself by watching arrivals and departures. It is also exposed to the full blast of the north wind, which blows with more or less force—generally very much more—five days out of seven. This is very nice at first, and at least chases all mosquitoes away, but it becomes rather a nuisance after a while. It is quite impossible to keep a window open, else everything in the room whirls round in cyclonic dance, and if it is shut perspiration sets in. But that is the Therapia climate! From nine o'clock till six, unless one sits in a draught, there is nothing for it but to pour, and pour, and pour. The Summer Palace is not quite so exposed to the north wind, but all its front rooms are pretty airy. The back ones are generally given to ladies'

maids and valets. On the other hand, if you live in "The Palace" you are rather dependent on boatmen to catch your steamer, unless you choose to walk round the most unsavoury village—and this is ■ very great disadvantage. But they have ■ nice public drawing-room, which is open practically to the whole of Therapia society every evening, and all day in fact ; a big terrace, on which there is always tea going on every afternoon ; a velodrome, and two tennis courts, one in front and one behind the hotel, prettily shaded by trees, and affiliated to the regular Constantinople Club. In this connection a tournament takes place every year, with very handsome prizes for Singles, Doubles, and Mixed Doubles for ladies and gentlemen, attracting entries from both Smyrna and Egypt. Indeed the "Palace" Tennis Court is probably the most frequented lounge of Therapia—in the mornings for ladies and a few idle diplomats, and in the evenings for the ■■■ back from town. There ■■■ also dances given about ■■■■ ■ week ■ the "Palace," to which anybody who ■ known at all ■ welcome, and altogether the hotel is ■ general "rendez-vous" for those who want ■■ amuse themselves.

Besides the hotel festivities and the Embassy garden-parties and dances, of which there ■■ always ■ good many, the richer residents generally entertain ■ great deal, and there are few evenings when ■ man need stay ■ home if sociably inclined. Of outdoor sports, other than tennis, there are occasional paper-chases, picnics without end to Belgrade Forest, Kilios, the Giant's Mountain, and elsewhere, and cricket matches at Beicos at least once and often twice a week. The Beicos meadows belong to the Sultan, but are always free to foreigners for cricket ■ football. A more ideal ground could hardly be imagined, and from July onwards till October, and even November, it is seldom that ■ Wednesday ■ Saturday passes without a match being brought off. The *stationnaires* bear the brunt of these shows, providing tea and refreshments, and most of the idle fair ■■■■ ■■■■ in their catques or launches to make pretence of watching the progress of the contests. When stumps are drawn ■ six, ■ thereabouts,

the best time of the day has come, and there is still an hour ■ two before dressing for dinner, to be spent in sailing ■ roaming up to Buyukdereh, ■ drifting about in mid-current to make private arrangements for the rest of the evening. Of course a correspondent, ■ least ■ English one, has no choice of villegiatura, and is bound to follow his Embassy up to Therapia, and there abide under its shadow. It may be thought that his lot is not ■ very hard one, and I for ■ would not be the first to grumble, but nevertheless Therapia is apt to pall ■ after a while. Of course the men are obliged to be perpetually running backwards and forwards into town, and an hour each way on a Bosphorus boat is not pure enjoyment in ■ time, especially when it is followed ■ preceded by a toil up to Pera and back, or worse, to the Porte at Stamboul, with a temperature of 110° and a dust fit to choke ■ chimney. Then we have to pay fancy prices for everything at Therapia, and, of course, keep up some sort of a *pied-à-terre* in town all the time—paying for our lunches ■ Therapia when eating them at the club, and twelve shillings a bottle, or an alternative of five shillings corkage, for our whisky in the evenings ■ our Bosphorus balcony, when the self-same dew can be had at three and sixpence anywhere in the street. And you can put everything else ■ the ■ scale. It must come very hard on ■ people; though correspondents who have rational editors are of ■ beyond the reach of such cares.

In addition to the ■ already mentioned, ■ get ■ very pleasant riding all round Therapia, and for those who do not keep their own horses there is ■ stable ready to supply very decent mounts. Sailing is also indulged in, though scarcely to such ■ extent as one might expect, considering that ■ strong breeze may be counted upon with tolerable certainty for five days out of six. There is ■ regatta always held towards the end of the season, but the principal interest centres in the races for the rowing boats of the various *stationnaires* and *caïquejees*, and any sailing match that creeps into the programme attracts little attention.

Before going ■ the Upper Bosphorus most people take ■ intermediate step at the Islands ■ one of the ■ stations. Both Prinkipo and Halki ■ most agreeable in the early spring, being delightfully warm, whilst Pera is still in ■ and chilly mists. The pine woods, too, which ■ these islands, are ■ extra attraction, especially for convalescents from winter influenza, which attacks about fifty per cent. of the European population every year. Nothing ■ be ■ reposeful than to lie stretched amongst the heather with the breeze sweeping in from the sea to load itself with the fragrance of the flowers and the forests, and listen lazily to the plash of the ■ on the rocks ■ couple of hundred feet below ; and then ■ gets such splendid food to satisfy the splendid appetite which island air inspires. Such fish ■ never appear at Pera *tables-d'hôte*, and vegetables, too, which are a real treat after the usual fare to which frequenters of clubs and hotels are accustomed. But perhaps for fish, Cadikeui and Moda take the palm. When I used to stay there we had only to hail a fisherman and tell him what we wanted, and it was ten to one that in ■ hour's time he would return with the order executed, whether it had been for three or four dozen oysters scraped up with the long four-pronged fork under our windows, ■ couple of solemn lobsters, or ■ dozen scrabbling crabs. If it ■ other fish we wanted, there was generally fat pink-red mullet or thorny-backed turbot to be had alive and kicking from the brine, and the baser sorts of mackerel, mullet, and such ■ fry ■ of ■ drugs in the market. San Stefano is much beloved of its own, though it never had much attractions for myself, ■ apparently for the great *profanum vulgus*. There is, however, no denying that it has certain mild sporting advantages ■ autumn draws on, since it is one of the favourite pitches of the migrating quail, which ■ killed in tens, if not in hundreds, of thousands there during September and October. It is also celebrated for its lark-shooting—a pastime ■ a little affected by the ladies, who turn out in the daintiest of costumes, armed with twenty-bores and mirrors ■ collect

materials for the pie. The next station to San Stefano is Kutchuk Chekmedjee, ■ the mouth of the lake, which stretches from there to Yarem Bourgas. This piece of water ■ times affords very good fun, both with rod and gun. It ■ with pike, and when they are on the feed it is not difficult to take a dozen with a spoon which will probably average between three and ten pounds apiece. If the weather is at all severe, there ■ always enormous flocks of duck swimming and fighting about the lake in winter, whilst grebe, divers, moorhens, and coot flap and dive in all directions. As for the latter, the surface is often black with them for hundreds of yards, and there must be many many thousands domiciled on this stretch. If ■ takes a boat from Kutchuk Chekmedjee and punts through the sluice gates into the lake, it will be an hour and ■ half's sailing and rowing to reach the bank of tall rushes at Yarem Bourgas fringing the stream and the marsh whither one goes to look, and seldom in vain, for snipe. As I am touching again on the subject of sport, I may ■ well finish with it before going further. The cream of shooting round Constantinople has always been considered to be the woodcock. For those who care for quail, there is ■ endless supply, but the cock is the king of the game-bag for Constantinople gunners. The first places where they appear are generally at Kilios ■ the Black Sea, and in the Belgrade Forest near Buyukdereh, after which, especially if there is ■ good fall of snow, they may generally be caught at Cherkesskeui and Sinekli on the railway line to Adrianople. The lucky ones who succeed in hitting off the first days of the passage at any of these places—and the passengers as well—can easily make fifteen or twenty couple bags, and that number of fine fat cock is very respectable. Another place where huge bags can be made, if the right day is "spotted," is at Dil Bournou, ■ the Gulf of Ismid. I have myself ■ the cock there flying about towards evening like jackdaws, and feeding out in the open on the grass by twos and threes. This only occurs, though, after a sudden snowstorm, covering all the hills and high grounds, and driving the birds down

to the ■ Other good ground is inland from Touzla on the Ismidt Railway, and ■ Candilli, where birds remain the whole winter up to March, though not in such numbers ■ in the first-mentioned choice preserves. There is indeed one piece of thick cover not ■ than half an hour's drive from Pera, belonging to the Sultan's Civil List, where on almost any afternoon from October to March you ■ move eight ■ ten cock—the knocking them over depends ■ your being perhaps rather above the average at the game.

Snipe may be had at various places, one of the best marshes being at Ismidt. Pheasants ■ very scarce, though ■ few can be had ■ Broussa, ■ also partridges, which have been nearly exterminated in European Turkey within ■ wide radius of Constantinople. Big game consists of pig and roedeer. Bear and stag are daily becoming rarer and more difficult to find anywhere near the city. Wild boar and roe may, however, be had within easy distance by those who have the opportunity of hunting with the Cercle d'Orient, or with either Cherif or Abram Pasha. The best bag I heard of was made by Cherif Pasha and his party, of which I myself was one, at Chaoush Chiftlik on the Gulf of Ismidt. In two days we killed eighteen pig, two roedeer, and ■ good many cock and "various." We hunted with ■ pack of about forty hounds, four ■ five couple of which were put into each beat. There ■ perhaps a dozen beaters who walked through with the hounds, and in all ■ daresay thirty or forty guns of sorts posted at points of vantage, though the real "shooting line" ■ which we eight real guns stood generally had most of the firing. My ■ share of this record ■ two boar ■ the first day. I cannot quit the subject without paying a tribute to our genial host, Cherif Pasha, now named Ottoman Minister to the Court of Stockholm. There are hundreds of very keen sports- ■ amongst the lower-class Turks, but in the upper ranks this taste is comparatively ■ Abram Pasha ■ probably the father of organised sport in Turkey, ■ thing after Western ideas, and ■ example ■ followed

by Izzet and Cherif Pasha. Poor Izzet, who took great pains over his wild fowling at Chekmedjee, is ■■ languishing in exile at Tripoli, and ■ good deal of Abram Pasha's shooting has been annexed by the Civil List. I fancy that Cherif Pasha's property at Chaoush Chiftlik will also go to rack and ruin before long, in the absence of its master. This is a pity, as it was and is a magnificent piece of natural cover, carefully preserved for the last year or two by Cherif Pasha, who bought the whole estate for ■ mere song. Owing to the prevalence of brigandage all down both sides of the Gulf of Ismidt, nobody cared much to bid for land in these parts until Cherif Pasha, ■■ of the venerable Sard Pasha, ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs, and himself A.D.C. to the Sultan and General of Brigade, bought it up. He at once built ■ shooting box there, with kennels for ■ pack of hounds, and plenty of accommodation for guests and beaters, and an invitation to shoot at Chaoush Chiftlik was always ■■ of the ambitions of Constantinople Nimrods. Nobody was ever invited who ■■ likely to be unpleasant to anybody else, and the best of good-fellowship always reigned, as it could hardly fail to do under the presidency of the unselfish *bonhomie* of the Pasha, whose jolly face and laugh kept us all in perpetual good-humour. But I must once and for all tear myself away from forest, river, and marsh, to approach more serious subjects; and the question is, which first to grapple with? I am here confronted with much the same difficulty ■ in dealing with Russia. It would not be very hard to write ■ whole book on Turkey as I have known it, and there is only half a chapter at disposal. To begin with, let us take the Palace—the *fons et origo mali*.

If anybody could put on paper a truthful record of ■■ month's doings at Yildiz, the book would be worth ■ thousand pounds—take any month of the year. That small circumference of two or three square miles on the top of the hill above Ortakeni and Beshiktash contains ■■ iniquity, probably, than any ■■ ten times ■ great on the surface of the globe. And the consequences of

what goes ■ so quietly in those shaded gardens and kiosques influence the whole civilised and more than half the barbarian world.

The moving spirit, the great master of the "Star Serai," is Abdul Hamid II.—a small-sized, stooping, but square-shouldered man, with a huge hooked Semitic or Armenian nose, shifty but piercing eyes under shaggy grey eyebrows looking out from a wrinkled grey-brown face, with slow step, and deliberate caressing utterance of speech, long-fingered claw-like hands, and slender narrow feet. When he came to the throne, the Sultan trod ■ his elder brother, and tried to forget the death of his uncle, trembling lest his own latter end should resemble theirs. But fate fought for him, and slowly but surely he settled himself firmly, and more firmly still, in the chair of his mighty ancestors. One by one he got rid of all the most dangerous of his statesmen, ending by strangling Midhat at Taif, doing away with Damad, making ■ domestic prisoner of Ghazi Osman, exiling Mukhtar to Egypt, and confining Kutchuk Said to his Yalu. By degrees he reduced the Grand Vizierate to impotence, and the Porte to ■ nonentity. The whole machinery of Government, as far ■ it ■ left in Turkish hands, was concentrated at Yildiz. The Council of Ministers rendered its *masbats* or decrees, ■ of old, but they ■ confirmed or rejected at the Palace without reason or motive. Grand Vizier and Ministers were treated like dogs, and the language used to them ■ such as they themselves would scarcely employ to their valets. The post of First Secretary at the Palace became far ■ important than that of the Grand Vizier, and that of a flunkey at Yildiz was more influential than the portfolio of a Minister. Such is the state of affairs to-day at the Palace on the top of the hill. A little ring surrounds the person of the Sovereign, inside which ■ but foreign Diplomats of the highest rank ■ hope to penetrate. It is difficult to say exactly who rules the roast, ■ there ■ several of almost equal influence and importance whose interest lies in keeping ■ good terms with each other.

Firstly, there is the domestic clique, headed by Loutfi Agha, a sort of chief head butler or major domo, associated with whom are Raghib Bey, Hadji Ali, and a few others. These are in hourly contact with the Sultan, and have almost unlimited patronage in questions which do not immediately affect external relations. It is through them that small conceivably external relations. It is through them decorations, appointments, minor administrative appointments, and insignificant pilferings are arranged.

The Army and Navy clique, through which all service promotions, and Turkish contracts for the Ministry of War and Marine are arranged, and so on, is headed by one or two officers, among whom I will not name, and a few favourite Circassians and Albanian ruffians who enjoy the highest Imperial favour. I feel tempted to give some anecdotes of the manner in which these gentry operate, but if once notice one first would be hard to stop. I may, however, that there is a case, which is of such public notoriety

I refer to an offence in quoting it. self during of that of an Albanian who distinguished himself during of the late by indiscriminate pillage and rapine in the late by indiscriminate pillage and repaired in Epirus, and who on the conclusion of peace could be further, and named A.D.C. Fifty pages myself to filled with this man's exploits, but I will confine

There is one of them.

Bankford was an old who had served the Ottoman Bank for thirty-five years, and who wished to retire. Sir Edgar Vincent agreed to allow him to do so, and gave him a sum of about one hundred and fifty pounds to enable him to dower his daughter, who was at school in Odessa. Bankford was engaged to be married. On leaving the Bank buildings, he stated to a friend, in the fulness of his heart, what had happened. This individual happened to be the tout for the Albanian, Ghani Bey, and at once seized the opportunity of inviting the other to spend the evening with himself and friends. This he did well knowing that Dimitri, living in poor lodgings, would be to carry his cash in his person. After dinner, he called for his victim, and they repaired to a in which Ghani Bey, his henchman Tcherkess Hassan, a daredevil

cut-throat, and another Palace official. No sooner was the old ■■ seated than Ghani demanded his money, enforcing the request by pointing ■ loaded revolver at his head, whilst Hassan pinned him from behind.

In the end Dimitri was robbed, beaten almost to insensibility, packed into a cab, and deposited ■ his door, minus his money, and with ■ threat that if he dared to open his mouth he was ■ dead man. He fell into a brain fever, during which his daughter arrived from Odessa. On recovery, nothing daunted by the threats, he applied to the Greek Minister for redress; but before a complaint could be made, the ■■ broke out, and Prince Maxvrodalo had to leave. The prospective bridegroom, hearing of the loss of the dowry, refused to fulfil the engagement, and the last I heard of the old man was that both he and his daughter were reduced to absolute beggary. Comment ■ a story like this is needless, especially when the hero of it is notorious as having repeated similar acts of almost open brigandage half a dozen times, all of which have been brought under notice of the police without any ■ having been taken to punish him; on the contrary, he still enjoys the highest favour.

It may be asked, What is the ■■ that the Sultan permits officers wearing his uniform to incur the universal opprobrium of Pera? And the ■■ is that anything is pardoned to ■■ who ■■ supposed to be absolutely reckless, and to stick at nothing if it is to their interest. It is ■ knot of similar devoted bravadoes which the Sultan wishes to keep round his person; and the "Prætorian Guard," ■ it ■ called, which is on chronic duty at Yildiz, is composed of pampered mercenaries, who ■■ petted and paid for nothing else than to keep them in blind devotion round their master, who winks at any enormities they choose to commit on their ■■ account.

There is also the religious coterie under Abdul Hudda erstwhile ■ wandering dervish, and now ■■ of the "Head Centres" of Islam. There ■■ be little doubt that ■■ effervescence either in Asia ■ Africa goes on without more or less active encouragement from the Holy Synod

■ Yildiz, which holds its meetings every Tuesday, and issues its bulls ■ despotically ■ those are launched which come from the Vatican. I myself frequently heard it said in Constantinople, five or six months before the troubles actually broke out, that England must look out for storms on the North-West Frontier, and discoveries of proclamations and correspondence later on amply proved the meddling of the Yildiz crew in the rising.

Besides those already mentioned, there is the First Secretary and his small particular clique, which is nevertheless one of the most powerful of them all. With Lutfi Agha, Tahsin Bey shares the enormous advantage of being in daily personal contact with the Sovereign for several hours, whereas many of the other myrmidons only have occasional and fleeting ■■■■ to the presence of the Sultan.

Tahsin himself is one of the most curious and really interesting of all the actors ■ the Turkish stage, although very little is usually heard of him by the outside world. His office of First Secretary is probably at the present moment ■ influential, if not ■■■■ so than any other in the empire. The growth of Palace power, synchronous with the decline of that of the Grand Vizierate and the Porte, dates from the day when Kutchuk Saïd showed to the Sultan how omnipotent the hand of Yildiz might be made, and how easy it would be to concentrate the whole administration within its walls, by working through ■ First Secretary instead of through ■ nominally responsible Vizier or Minister. In order to carry out this programme, it ■■■■ necessary to find a Bash Kiatib (or First Secretary) who should always be content to efface himself, and remain eternally under the greatest of all shadows. If responsibility were to be fixed on him, he would be no better than those whom he had robbed both of it and its privileges. Tahsin Bey might have been created expressly for the position, so perfectly does he fulfil all its requirements. Anybody who has ordinary business with Yildiz is ■■■■ to be firstly referred to Tahsin. On driving up the hill, his carriage will be stopped ■ hundred yards away from the

gates, and one or other of a miserable pack of jackals in waiting will escort him very ostentatiously up to the portals, in the hopes of a shilling tip for doing nothing. Before entering, the visitor is quickly deprived of his umbrella and stick (another shilling to get them back), and asked his name, address, and profession. On mentioning Tahsin Bey, he is led along the garden-walk, and into a little kiosk or low range of buildings, where he is again, entering, deprived of his coat, goloshes, and other encumbrances (one shilling more). He is then ushered into a waiting-room amongst a motley crowd of turbaned sheikhs, uniformed officers, be-fezzed and apologetic-kneed officials, and perhaps another foreigner or two. The room is furnished with a mixture of tawdry magnificence, squalor, and childish decoration. Bookcases filled with presentation volumes occupy various corners, and gorgeously-illuminated texts of the Korán, together with absurd and archaic attempts at landscape-painting, adorn the walls.

Coffee and cigarettes, of course, are brought, and it will depend on the importance of the visitor or the length of his patience how long he may wait. An English correspondent may expect about half to three-quarters of an hour, if he cares to stay it out. Three-quarters of an hour to drive there, and the same back, and the time of the interview will take up the whole morning or afternoon, and cost about a sovereign. It is worth it in a way, but not often. When your turn comes, a shuffling little menial will beg you to step in, and you go to Tahsin's den. This is a small room, about fifteen or twenty feet square, furnished with a writing-table for the Secretary, and a divan and a couple of chairs for those who come to see him.

If you are of any importance, Tahsin will gracefully salute and ask after your health, before continuing scribbling on the paper he is always holding in his hand. The lesser fry are allowed to take their seats, and wait an indefinite time before receiving any notice whatever. Tahsin is a man of about thirty-five, or at most forty,

with ■ pretty crisp black beard, and soft, deer-like eyes, the most gentle, caressing voice imaginable, and altogether the most modest mien of any Bey in Turkey. Yet it is through the throat of this dove, so to speak, that the lion roars, and his delicate, feminine hands are the velvet gloves under which the iron fingers of Abdul Hamid indite their most fateful *Iradehs*.

Whenever any question of sudden importance arises with a foreign Power, it is through the First Secretary that any confidential *pourparlers* are always engaged, and every negotiation with the Armenian Patriarchate, with the Revolutionists, with the Young Turks, with the Albanians, in fact every imaginable contingency requiring tact and secrecy, is dealt with almost exclusively by the Sphinx-like Tahsin, often, if not generally, to the entire exclusion of the Vizier and the nominally responsible Ministers.

It is true that the Ambassadors sometimes ■ Tewfik Pasha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the First Dragomans repair almost daily ■ the Porte for the transaction of current business; but for everything at all touching *la haute politique*, it is always through the First Secretary that communication is opened with the Sultan himself. In other words, the Porte has ■ become merely ■ bureau attached to the Secretariate, whose decisions it has ■ carry out. The Council of Ministers sits every Wednesday at Stamboul to preserve appearances, but whenever occasion arises it is convoked in *stance extraordinaire* at Yildiz, and in either case its opinions are simply embodied in a *masbata*, which is forwarded through Tahsin Bey to the Sultan, and only becomes executory after receiving the Imperial *Iradeh*, or sanction. In old days the *Iradeh* was only required for decisions of exceptional importance, but nowadays a heap of sand cannot be shifted from one side of the road to the other without a royal *Iradeh*. The effect of this system on the Administration ■ scarcely be imagined by those not familiar with things Turkish, as it most certainly cannot be described in its far-reaching results. The battles for *Iradehs*

ceaseless, and the victory rests almost always with those who can pay the most. Diplomatic pressure, of course, succeeds sometimes in extorting these precious instruments when the opposition is not too strong; but in such the process is often most wearisome, and the most ridiculous uncertainty often exists for weeks at a time as to whether such and such an *Iradeh* has actually been issued or not. One of the stone walls in the path of *Iradehs* is the Council of State, in which two members, or one, if he is strong enough, can block a measure which has been approved separately by its Ministry and by the Council of Ministers *en bloc*. I might give dozens, scores, perhaps hundreds, of cases, but here is a typical one. There was a British philanthropic society which wished to provide water for the thirsty pilgrims at Jerusalem. It sought no profit—in fact, it would have been only at a loss that the scheme could have been carried out. It was strongly approved by everybody concerned, but in the Council of State Djâvid Bey, son of Khalil Rifaat Pasha, the Grand Vizier, declared that unless he received a thousand pounds the concession should not pass. Remonstrances were made to him to the effect that the Holy Tomb was a place of worship to Moslems as well as to Christians, and that the work was pious. It was all to no purpose: he held out for his payment. The British Embassy pressed, and every resource was brought to bear, but up to the moment of writing without avail.¹

The difficulties in the way of obtaining any decisive order of immensely increased by the hundred and channels leading up to the final *Iradeh*, which is itself jealously guarded by a rapacious horde, all of whose mouths have to be filled before they will cease yelping their opposition. This is one of the reasons why, since the

¹ This youth, Djâvid Bey, perhaps twenty-five years old, for some time kept a house of auction at the Galata Bridge, where he quite openly sold Government appointments in the provinces to the highest bidders. Not only minor posts were thus disposed of, but Calmakams, Mudirs, and, I believe, once or twice even Valis, bought their places from Djâvid at the Bridge. This is such public notoriety that there is no harm in stating the fact.

inauguration of the ■■■ régime under Abdul Hamid II., British interests have suffered very appreciably. Whereas foreigners, especially the Teutonic breed and alien East-erns, such ■ Greeks, Syrians, Jews, and Egyptians, are perfectly willing, and more or less able, to wrestle and squabble with endless patience through the inter-minable labyrinthine windings which now surround the (apparently) simplest piece of business, and to make their calculations beforehand with the greatest nicety as to how much palm-grease is required, the Britisher has neither the equanimity nor the necessary fellow-feeling to enable him to waste time and money in struggling to retain a market which he was ■■ of the first to open, and which he long ruled. A German Jew or ■ Greek, a Syrian ■ a Copt, quite enjoys the ignoble heckling which every business man has to engage in with the present Turkish Administration, because it is quite congenial to his nature. With an Englishman, however, it is repugnant to all his ideas, and ■■ are gradually being beaten out of the field in big contracts ■ in petty trading.

Besides national idiosyncratical reasons, too, ■ must also be taken into account that ■■ Embassy has seldom lately taken the trouble to put its foot down ■ any commercial questions, whereas those of several other Great Powers seem to consider themselves rather ■ Consulates than Embassies, and are equally ready to promise Diplomatic countenance and support in return for financial and trade favours ■ they are to send in ultimatums and call up warships on the slightest provocation—two courses which are studiously avoided by ourselves except when the gravest interests ■■ at stake, whereas they are adopted by others if one of their subjects is ever so little aggrieved in body, mind, or estate.

There is ■ popular belief abroad that the Sultan lives in ■ state of perpetual fear and trembling for his life, and that the Palace of Yildiz is guarded by ■ thousand elaborate contrivances against any would-be assassins. Having had ■ good opportunities as most observers, and ■ great deal better chance than nine out of ten of forming

■ opinion through those in comparatively close contact with His Majesty's person, ■ diffidently hazard my opinion for what it may be worth, that "The Great Assassin" has at least ■ comfortable and untroubled a life ■ the majority of his royal "brothers" in Europe. Several times when ■ have happened to be within the Gardens I have seen the Sultan driving about alone in his little victoria, accompanied only by a groom or his son, or walking at perfect ease about the gravel paths, and he has never on any occasion given to ■ the least impression of being under the influence of open ■ hidden fear. Whether he really fancies that he may escape the fate of most of his predecessors,¹ ■ whether with Moslem indifference he is awaiting his hour, ■ maintain that neither in face nor behaviour does Abdul Hamid betray the slightest apprehension of the terror under which he is ■ frequently represented as living. The ground for this legend is probably his dislike for driving about in public, and his gradual withdrawal from all but the necessary Friday ceremonials and the function of the Hirkat Cherif. As ■ matter of fact, though, if outsiders wished to attempt his life, there would be very little difficulty in effecting their purpose during any Selamluk—far more easily than on the rare occasions when His Majesty quits the precincts of Yildiz and is surrounded by vigilant and emulous escorts, whilst all sorts of ostentatious precautions ■ taken beforehand both by the army and police. Of ■ ■ assassin at Yildiz could hardly expect to survive many moments, but then most actual or intending regicides have made up their minds to exchange their own lives for that of the victim. I have twice seen the Sultan's carriage approached by petitioners, who might just as well have been assassins, on Friday Selamluks. And ■ the first occasion ■ paper, which might have been ■ bomb, ■ thrown straight into the Sultan's lap, whilst the man leant over the edge of the vehicle. Yet I ■ bound to say, though everybody else seemed electrified with excitement, the Sultan himself scarcely started, and neither dropped

¹ Only ■ Sultans have died ■ undoubtedly natural death.

The Young Turks, though fully alive to the many superiorities of European methods, are most ■■■■ to having these methods forced upon them by Europeans, being of opinion, and quite rightly, that not one Western in ten thousand is capable of understanding the needs of Orientals. What they wish is themselves to introduce such reforms as they see are most urgently needed, since experience has taught them that the interference of the Powers, though exercised nominally, and sometimes genuinely and earnestly, in the interests of the empire, invariably leads to ■ curtailment of Ottoman rights and privileges and a gradual undermining of their independence.

Europe has now ■■■■ to the conclusion that ■ is impossible for the Turks to govern themselves decently—being logically forced to that deduction by the persistent and increasing misrule under the régime which now obtains ■ Yildiz. Consequently Europe has ■■■■ had any sympathy with the Young Turks, who have been left to fight their battle quite alone. The struggle against the arbitrary, unlimited, and murderous powers that be is unequal, and hitherto has led to ■■ result at all, except wholesale exile and a good deal of torture and bloodshed. In fact, although much less has been heard about their sufferings, the Young Turks have been ■■ badly treated in proportion to their numbers ■ the Armenians. With the ideas they hold they cannot expect—or at least they will never receive—much help from Europe, and so closely are they watched by the legion of spies that they dare not even subscribe five pounds towards a common object. Being unable to collect money, to found newspapers, to form Committees, or otherwise propagate their ideas, their hopes naturally centre in the disappearance of the Sultan. I do not say that they go ■■ far as to contemplate any *coup de main*, but there is little doubt that at Yildiz, if any fear at all is felt, it arises from this quarter.

The second foe is the Armenian. But the events of the last few years have inspired the Sultan with considerable confidence respecting the Armenians. In the first

place, they ■ Christians, and in dealing with them he has the general sympathy and support of every class of his Moslem subjects. It is ■ fundamental tenet of the faith that any Giaour who rebels against Islam or stirs up discord is to be destroyed. The Armenians have not ceased from provoking the Sultan in the most objectionable of all forms. If they had simply risen by themselves, the rising would probably have been put down in the usual way on the spot, and nothing more would have been heard of it. But the Armenians worked in ■ different fashion. They formed Committees abroad, interested foreign missionaries and politicians, complained to Consuls and Embassies, and left no stone unturned to bring about the active intervention of Europe in their favour. They had always been labouring under the common disabilities of Christian *rayahs* of the Porte—in exactly the same degree (and, I deliberately state my conviction, in no greater one)—as Bulgars, Greeks, and other *rayahs*, until they began agitating amongst foreign circles. It was then that the Sultan ■ ■ ■ that the Armenians ■ ■ ■ plotting for the dismemberment of the empire—that they were striving to induce Russia ■ England, ■ all the Powers, to coerce Turkey—as they were—and that they were ■ danger to Islam. The Sultan lent ■ ■ ■ pleasant ■ ■ ■ to these whispers, and decided to punish the offenders. The Sassoun ■ ■ ■ by ■ ■ ■ the beginning of the story, but they first opened the eyes of Europe. As has always happened when Europe has tried to operate upon the Sultan in Concert, the Powers commenced by conferences and joint notes and threats innumerable. His Majesty only grew more angry ■ this result of the Armenian intrigues, which was exactly what had been foretold by the fanatical Moslems. They urged that the wretched Armenians must be wiped out, in order to give ■ lesson to the infidels, and the work began. As for the Powers in Concert, Abdul Hamid ■ ■ ■ cared one jot for such ■ combination. The Concert, in his eyes, ■ an instrument for the perpetuation of ■ ■ rule, ■ mutual jealousies prevent any ■ ■ of its members from taking

him to task. The break-up of the Concert is his only fear—an independent action of Russia or England — some other Western nation has greater terrors for him than all the far-off thunder of the Concert. In the matter of the Armenians, events are too recent to need recapitulation. An absurd Reform Scheme — framed with a flourish of trumpets after several thousand Armenians had been sacrificed to the blatant Committees, and when it had been delegated to the wastepaper basket, where it — reposes, a few thousand — murdered, just to show the Sultan's contempt for European interference.

The Committees, every member of which in my humble opinion ought to be hanged, nevertheless continued to work and threaten in safety from European capitals, leaving their unfortunate compatriots to bear the consequences in Turkey. At last the Armenian Patriarchate came into direct communication with the Sultan, and temporarily induced the Committees to keep quiet. The result was immediately seen in a relaxation of several of the strictest and most oppressive — in force, and in the holding out of — hope for the future.

I am the last — to justify in any sense the barbarous and ruthless — of the innocents, but I maintain that the responsibility for them rests divided between the cowardly Committees abroad and the braggart and ineffectual intervention of Europe. The Committees brought about the intervention, and the intervention provoked the Sultan, and brought about the massacres. Either there ought to have been no intervention, or it ought to have been thorough. Intervention by the Concert, though, — never be thorough, and the net result of the whole miserable business was the loss of scores of thousands of innocent lives, the desolation of fruitful provinces, and the absolute wreckage of the whole Armenian national wealth and prosperity, whilst not one single murderer — shot — hanged, and the power and prestige of the Sultan was consequently, through his capacity for defying Europe, thus proved, enormously increased.

It is all very well to call him the "Great Assassin," but from ■ Moslem point of view he ■ very fairly justified in killing any number of rebellious infidels who ■ being supported by combined Europe in what he and every Turk considered ■ ■ plot against the realm. The Turks retorted on England especially, that we used to blow Moslems from the muzzles of our guns and burn whole villages and mosques in India for an insult offered to one of our officials, and were they not to make an example of these Armenian dogs?

It is a ghastly and unpleasant subject, but having been ■ the spot and ■ the inner working of the whole machinery, and heard the opinions of all concerned, I think it only right to put the blame a little ■ evenly on the right shoulders. There is no doubt that Abdul Hamid ordered most of the massacres and ■ earned his title of "Assassin," but the accessories before the fact, and after it, ■ the Huntchak and other Committees and the cackling Concert of Europe. The honours ■ disgrace of the conflict rest, ■ far, entirely with Yildiz. From time to time the Committees threaten to use dynamite against the Bank, Public Debt, or other innocent establishment, thus prosecuting their infamous and futile programme of attempting to force the hand of Europe by outrages on innocent people, Christians like themselves. If any one of the Committee ■ had the heart of a mouse he would come to Constantinople and strike the blow himself at Yildiz, but the Sultan has ■ fear of any such self-devotional courage, and though another bomb or two may be thrown here and there, it is not apprehended that any danger is threatened now from Huntchak, Trochak, or other "ak" or "ian."

The other two categories of possible conspirators are the army and isolated desperadoes smarting under individual grievance. As regards Ministerial combinations such as, under Midhat and Hussein Avni, deposed Murad, they need not be taken into account, ■ all cohesion ■ semblance of any official party has long since disappeared. Kiamil Pasha is ■ too old, and Kutchuk Said, the only

other man who might perhaps have rallied the bureaucrats round him, is altogether paralysed politically, and historically may be considered to have ceased to exist. None of the present Ministry have any following to speak of, or any programme ■ indeed individuality, unless it be Mahmoud Djellaladin Pasha, and his record is not ■ to inspire confidence ■ to command the slightest following or respect, much less support, either from Turks or Ambassadors. Most of the latter representing Europe would be only too delighted to ■ ■ upheaval and the deposition of the Sultan, and several of them would doubtless give every possible assistance and countenance to any movement tending to such a result, if it offered any tangible guarantees for the substitution of anything better, or even of success. But their official position precludes them from all but the most guarded expressions of sympathy with this or that kick at the licentious tyranny against which they themselves weakly protest, verbally here through their dragomans, and in writing through the couriers to their respective Cabinets.

The army remains. All that is left of Turkey to-day is really its soldiery. By the sword the empire was created, and, according to biblical teaching, by the sword alone it can fall. Meanwhile it is by its sword that it keeps ■ its legs. Whatever else is bad about the Moslem faith, it cannot be denied that it breeds good fighters. Anybody who ■ the Moslem in the field, whether it be ■ ■ troops in India,—our Afridi foes,—the Baggara dervishes, or the Turkish linesmen, cannot fail to be struck with his splendid qualities. The ■ of the faith which is in him sends him ■ calmly into battle ■ if he ■ going to till his field. If he falls, it is only to pass straight from a life of struggle, toil, and weariness into the Paradise of Djionna; whether he fall or not ■ written in the Book. He will pick his way ■ ■ ■ cernedly under ■ storm of bullets ■ if he were driving his donkey to market, and when in the field, under orders, he obeys them ■ blindly as a ■ obeys his father. The call to ■ ■ also answered ■ readily ■ if it ■ a bidding

to a feast. It ■ the summons from the Caliph, who sits in the seat of God. As years go ■ and the light of civilisation penetrates more clearly into the blindness of the old faith—as the Moslem is brought slowly into closer and more contaminating contact with the independent and free-thinking standards of Western and Christian philosophy, the original devotion to the Crescent and the Prophet, to the Caliph and the Korân, is certainly weakening, but it is still strong enough to make the Turkish nation and the Ottoman army a valuable friend or ■ formidable foe. The navy has for the last twenty years been a withered branch, but since the Greek War, when not a little needless apprehension ■ felt from the Greek fleet, ■ slight revival has been noticeable in this department, and the time may yet come when, if Turkey has money, she may again possess ships. But to-day the army is still supreme, and is the most mighty artery of Turkey. If any party ■ foreign Power, any General or Minister, could succeed in gaining over the suffrages of a majority of the Constantinople garrison ■ of the Adrianople Army Corps, it need only be a question of hours to establish a provisional Government.

It is in view of such a contingency that the Sultan has fortified Yildiz and filled its precincts and the surrounding barracks with picked regiments with increased pay, and officers devoted to his service and pampered with every imaginable favour. In all there ■ probably ■ fifteen thousand men in and around the Palace, with another fifteen thousand spread along the Bosphorus, the near edges of the Marmora, and in Stamboul. The officers of all these outside regiments are frequently changed, and an army of spies is attached to each, ■ that no possible surprise could be attempted by them ■ the faithful at Yildiz itself.

Besides the general barrack garrison in and about the Palace, there is a special ■ of guards, mostly Albanians, watching every door and gate inside. These ■ especially chosen for strength and reckless courage, and ■ kept in good temper and *soi-disant* fidelity by continual presents and petting. It seems, however, clear that if ■ the evil moment arrives, it will be ■ of these

mercenaries who fear neither God, man, nor the devil who will deal the blow, since they are faithful to watch and guard for money, they may be bought to betray and kill by a greater offer.

The risk from personal vengeance is comparatively slight, for though the most fearful crimes are almost daily perpetrated by order, and with the countenance of the Palace, the Moslem in general does not hold the Caliph responsible, or even if he does so, would hesitate to raise his hand against Zil-Ullah, the "Shadow of God." Should any such accident arrive, it would certainly occur either through a desperate Albanian, if a Moslem at all, or far more probably through a Macedonian Bulgar or Greek.

In thus reviewing the chances of the forcible expulsion of the Sultan from the scene, I would wish it to be understood that I am merely perpending the chances which have for long been the subject of daily conversation, and which for that very reason are, at least to my mind, growing more remote as the days pass. Personally, I doubt if any sudden disappearance of the central figure would effect a very great change in the general situation. It might and it might not; all would depend, firstly, on the moment when it occurred, and secondly, on the quality of its performance.

Supposing, for supposition's sake, that the Sultan were to die to-night of an apoplectic stroke, or any other visitation of God.¹ Unless an open revolution occurred which would bring about an instant occupation, probably by Russia of Constantinople, we should simply see the installation of Reshad Bey, and a continuation

¹ An army doctor I once knew was a very fine shot with a rifle, and withal a somewhat eccentric character. After serving in Cyprus for a while and in Egypt, he went to Australia, where he was appointed a military officer at an out-station. One morning he was on the beach with his rifle, and saw some ducks sporting about three hundred yards off. He drew a bead on one and fired, sending an attendant to pick the animal up. On reaching the spot, though, it was discovered that the supposed seal was a black man. A coroner's inquest was held, the marksman presiding, and the verdict was that the man had met his death "by the visitation of God."

for another twenty ■ thirty years of the same Palace régime—only, perhaps, with more unrestrained licence, owing to the weaker grasp of the new titular of the Caliphate.

For whatever ■ may say of Abdul Hamid, he is ■ strong man. I daresay there ■ ■ who will contest this, but anybody who knows anything about Turkey will bear me out. He has lost province after province—Egypt, Eastern Roumelia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, and is about to lose Crete; but the chances ■ that any other Sultan would long since have lost Turkey. In spite of ■ disastrous ■ with Russia before he had fairly settled himself on his throne, he has managed to keep up his authority positively intact and absolute over every inch of land where he holds sway. He has always preferred to give up his sovereignty altogether rather than to have it tampered with. Of ■ in Eastern Roumelia and Cyprus, while accepting tribute, he has long since gracefully withdrawn. But wherever he keeps a Turkish Vali, the land must be Turkish. When the Cretan question became acute, he quickly accepted the inevitable, and agreed to the autonomy. The time may come when he or his successor will have to do the same for Macedonia and Armenia; but for either of these there will be a stiffer fight. As for Crete, it has always been a ■ ■ Turkey, and is no real loss. Macedonia is the last remaining European province politically, for Salonica and Adrianople ■ almost parts of Constantinople. At present almost half the available armed strength of Turkey is available for the defence of Macedonia, and it may be taken for granted that it will not be ceded without ■ most stubborn contest. The “lopping off” of Macedonia, which most of the Great Powers are exceedingly anxious to see, would be the death-knell of Turkey as a European Power; and when ■ the Sultan has to retire into Asia, his days will be numbered.

In conclusion, one word or two on the policy of Europe, and especially England, towards the Sultan.

Has Europe in general any harmonious idea as to

what ■ wishes for ■ future of Turkey? After nearly twenty years of tolerably close observation of its action, ■ have ■ discover such, ■ if any exists, ■ would be a very good thing both for Europe and for Turkey, and for the population, Moslem and Christian, under the Sultan's rule, if the representatives of the Powers would embody it in a solemn Convention. Up to ■ there have been periodical and spasmodic efforts at joint action to establish what are vaguely called "reforms" to apply ■ various portions of the empire, and schemes for these are drawn up in the most happy-go-lucky style, approved and pigeon-holed; whilst things go on ■ before until something unexpected occurs, and the whole situation is changed.

Either the Turkish Empire is to be maintained in its integrity, ■ it is to be dismembered. In its heart of hearts each Power expects and waits for the dismemberment, eagerly watching for the first signs so ■ to grab something for itself. I do not except England, though ■ honestly believe ■ policy is the most disinterested amongst the three or four greater Powers. Still, when the time comes, ■ shall certainly not be backward in claiming ■ share, and of late ■ have done nothing to put off that time—rather the contrary.

In the ■ of events I believe that the dismemberment is inevitable; but it will not take place without ■ death struggle. The question for us is whether to hasten that struggle ■ to put it off, as it undoubtedly rests with us to do. In the end, Russia and Austria will have to divide Turkey in Europe, with ■ of the Balkan nationalities ■ help them, and England will have to seek her compensation where and how she can. This might, however, very easily be deferred for another hundred years. I have already said earlier in this book that my own humble and possibly wrong idea is that England would do well ■ clear ■ of the Mediterranean, and let the other European Powers fight out their differences ■ the body of Turkey; but there is ■ alternative held by much wiser men than I. That is that we should support Turkey

against Russia. There ■ much to ■ ■ for this also ; but ■ ■ ■ ■ good line, it ought to be taken up in ■ ■ ■ —not alluded ■ as a policy, and abandoned altogether in practice. For years past in the Bosphorus, the Power most hostile ■ Turkey has certainly been England, and ■ cannot expect to gain Turkish confidence by ceaselessly bullying her.

Recent ■ ■ in China have shown that Russia is slowly enveloping us in the north and east, and it only remains ■ ■ for her to come down upon Turkey, ■ she may do at any moment, and overrun Armenia, in order to obtain command of the Persian Gulf. We may well ask ourselves how ■ should like to ■ ■ Russia and France masters of Asia Minor, with armies and railways reaching through Mesopotamia, and the Czar omnipotent over the whole of Northern Asia, with ■ port in China, and another on the Persian Gulf, thus embracing India in an ■ ■ net.

The whole policy of Russia at Constantinople for years past has aimed at destroying ■ influence, which alone she fears ; and our ■ policy seems to have been directed towards backing Russia up, and alienating the Porte and the Palace.

I am aware that the prevailing sentiment is that the Sultan is ■ "assassin" and a double-dyed villain, with whom ■ Government cannot shake hands ; but the Sultan is not altogether Turkey. We ■ ■ a great Moslem Power, with millions of Moslem subjects, face to face with ■ mighty and unscrupulous enemy, and ■ ought ■ make up ■ ■ minds either to knit closer the ties with our old friends, or else to depart in peace and strengthen ourselves within our ■ borders. Our present policy of backing our enemy, and snubbing ■ possible bulwark against him, is neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring.

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